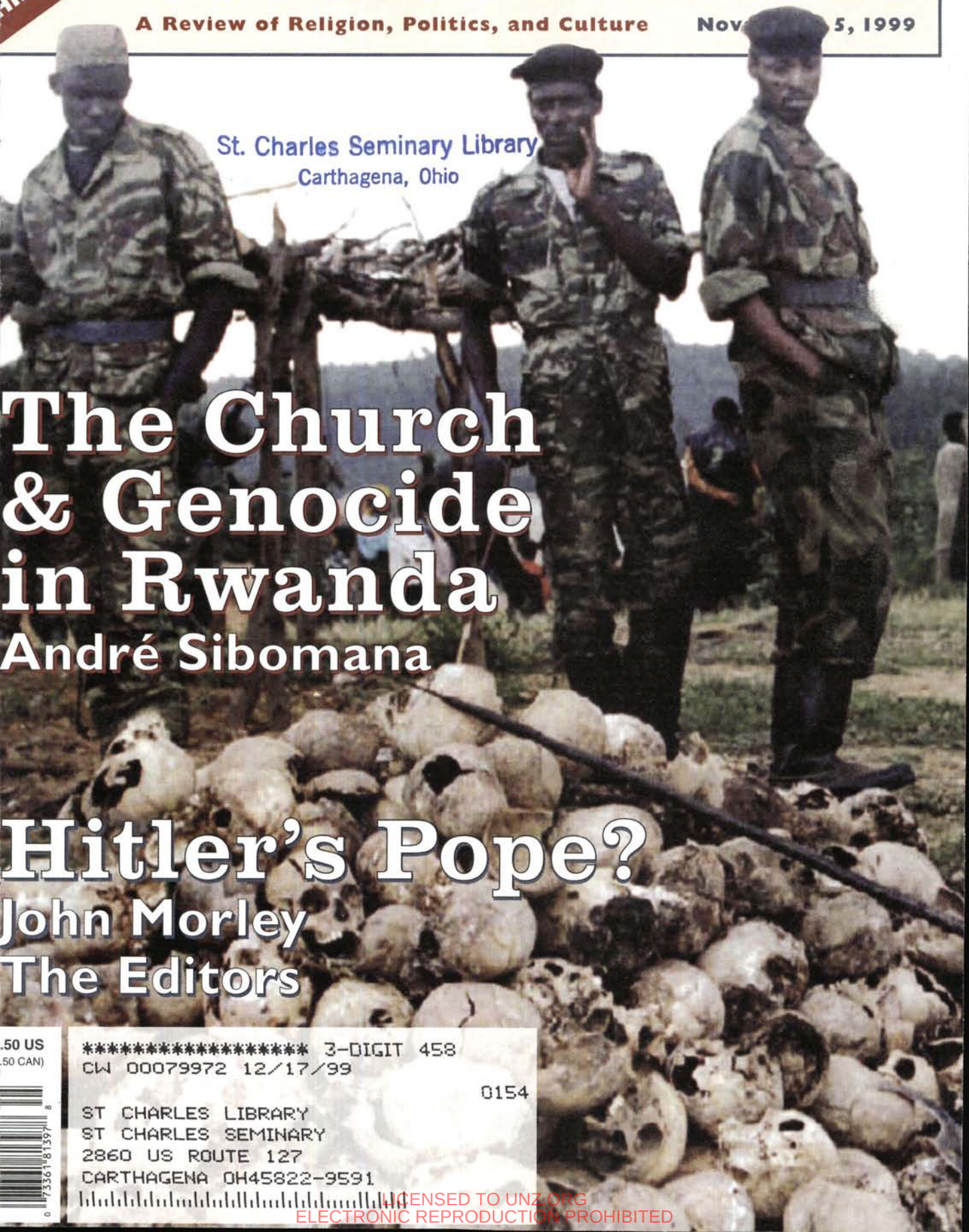
aria Donnelly
HILDREN'S BOOKS

COMMONWEAL

A Review of Religion, Politics, and Culture Nov 5, 1999

St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio



The Church & Genocide in Rwanda
André Sibomana

Hitler's Pope?
John Morley

The Editors

.50 US
.50 CAN)

********** 3-DIGIT 458
CW 00079972 12/17/99

0154

ST CHARLES LIBRARY
ST CHARLES SEMINARY
2860 US ROUTE 127
CARTHAGENA OH45822-9591

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Helping people help themselves.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development

Good Jobs, Decent Housing, Safe Neighborhoods, Strong Leaders

You have the power to make a difference for the poor of this country. Please give generously at your parish in November.

For more information, to get involved, or to make a donation, call the Catholic Campaign for Human Development at 1-800-946-4CHD or visit our web site at www.nccbuscc.org/cchd.

Catholic Campaign for Human Development
United States Catholic Conference • 3211 Fourth Street NE
Washington DC 20017-1194 • 1-800-946-4CHD
www.nccbuscc.org/cchd

Working to end poverty and injustice in the United States.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FOUNDED 1924

COMMONWEAL

November 5, 1999 / Volume CXXVI, Number 19

UPFRONT

Correspondence 4

Editorial *Cornwell's popes* 5

Et Ceteras *Elephant dung* 6
Scholarship & faith 6

From the archives *November 15, 1963* 7

COLUMNISTS

Alternative treatment
Sidney Callahan 8

Books at the millennium
Abigail McCarthy
Have they a future? 9

SHORT TAKE

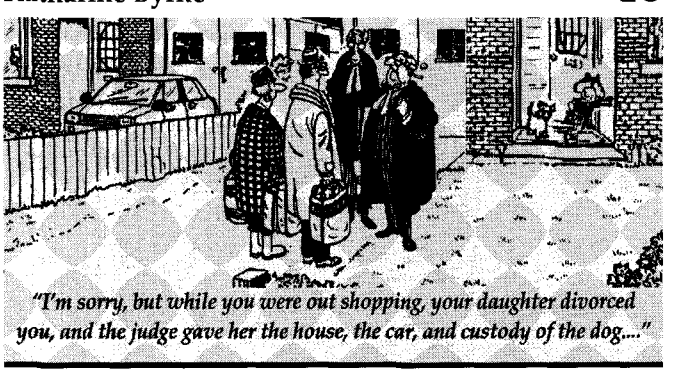
Religion & the Court
Edward McGlynn Gaffney, Jr.
Will the Supreme Court's rulings on religious freedom become more coherent? 10

ARTICLES

NEVER AGAIN?
André Sibomana
A priest challenges the church and all sides in the Rwanda disaster. 12

DEAR BISHOPS
Una M. Cadegan, Dennis M. Doyle, Raymond L. Fitz, John O. Geiger, James L. Heft, Terrence Tilley 16

ATTENTION DEFICIT
Katharine Byrne 26



"I'm sorry, but while you were out shopping, your daughter divorced you, and the judge gave her the house, the car, and custody of the dog...."

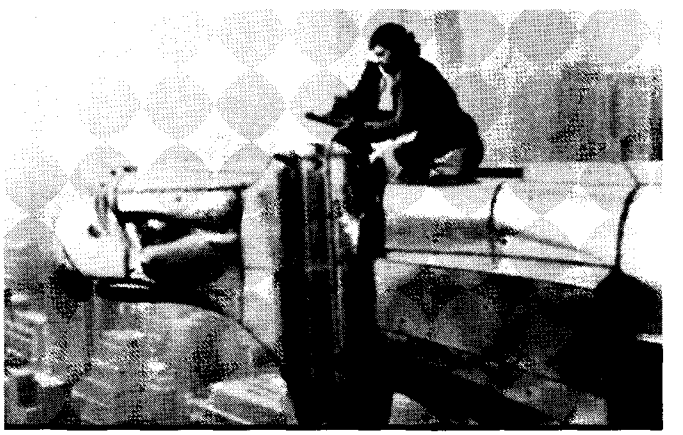
VERDICTS

SCREEEN

AMERICAN BEAUTY
Richard Alleva 19

MEDIA

PBS's 'New York'
Celia Wren 20



BOOKS

Revivals & new arrivals
Daria Donnelly
Children's books 22

Hitler's Pope
by John Cornwell
John F. Morley 27

Urban Exodus
by Gerald Gamm
Tom Deignan 28

POETRY

Daddy Long Arms
On the Rise
Bill Ayres 18

THE LAST WORD

Williamsburg: The past unchained
Peter Feuerherd 31

Commonweal • 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 405, New York, NY 10115 • (212) 662-4200 • http://www.commonwealmagazine.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To the Editors

By the numbers

Reading your editorial on philosopher Peter Singer's appointment to the chair of bioethics at Princeton ["Princeton's Gradgrind," September 24], I was reminded of an experience I had as an undergraduate at that same institution. During a lecture on utilitarianism in a philosophy course, the graduate assistant invited my classmates and me to assign value points (maximum: ten) to human beings, and to speculate about how to maximize utility for society as a whole. Neither I nor my classmates challenged the premise of the exercise. For whatever reason—I can still feel myself choking on the words that wouldn't come—I remained silent then. Thank you for speaking up in this matter today.

TIMOTHY P. SCHILLING
Seattle, Wash.

Social Security: the numbers

I appreciated Abigail McCarthy's notice [September 10] that my book, *Social Security and Its Enemies*, "makes a case for Social Security as America's most efficient insurance program and one function the government can perform more effectively than the private sector can." Readers should be informed, however, that Matthew Weidinger of the Ways and Means Committee staff, rather than "stating the problem clearly," presented misleading information.

True, there are fewer workers today for each elderly person than before, and the ratio will decline somewhat more. But this change has been anticipated from the beginning, and the system was designed to accommodate it. What is meaningful is the percentage of the population in the work force. That figure today is 46 percent. In 2030, at the height of the baby boomer retirement, it will drop only to 44 percent. This will still be considerably more favorable than the ratio thirty to forty years ago, when the work force contained only 37 percent of the population. The influx of women into the work force largely accounts for the difference.

Are people having fewer babies than during the baby boom? Yes, but the figures are not so dramatic as portrayed. In the past eighteen years, nearly as many live births occurred in the United States as during the eighteen years of the baby boom (72 million, as opposed to 76 million). Are people really "living up to 20 years longer than they used to after reaching 65"? Hardly. Since 1940 (the year of the first benefit payments), life expectancy at 65 has increased by 3.6 years for men and 5.8 years for women—but the increase to 67 of the age for full retirement compensates for two of those years.

Enemies of Social Security exaggerate strains on the system by stressing "intermediate" projections rather than "low-cost projections," though the latter—which predict no difficulty, ever—are consistent with actual economic and demographic conditions.

People of good will should applaud Ms. McCarthy's recognition of the *social* in Social Security. They may be reassured that the only danger to the system comes not from economics or demographics, but from special interests. The only way to save Social Security is to persuade elected officials to leave it substantially as it is.

MAX J. SKIDMORE
Kansas City, Mo.

The writer is University of Missouri Curators' Professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

(Continued on page 30)

75 COMMONWEAL

1999 marks Commonweal's 75th year of publication.
We invite you to celebrate with us...in New York:

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
at Fordham University, Lincoln Center, New York
on Tuesday, November 30, 1999

"On Being a Reluctant Catholic"
a talk by Alice McDermott
Author of *Charming Billy*, *That Night*, *At Weddings & Wakes*
and winner of the National Book Award for Fiction
at 5:15 P.M. in the Law School Auditorium and is free of charge.

Followed by a 75th Anniversary Dinner
at 7:00 P.M. in the President's Dining Room.
The dinner is $1 x 75 years = $75

For more information or to purchase tickets, please call (toll free):
1-888-495-6755; e-mail: commonweal@msn.com; or write:
Commonweal, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 405, New York, NY 10115.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STAFF

Editor: **Margaret O'Brien Steinfels**
Executive Editor: **Paul Baumann**
Managing Editor: **Patrick Jordan**
Production Editor: **Tiina Aleman**
Senior Writer: **Robert G. Hoyt**
Editorial Assistant: **Maurice Timothy Reidy**
Copy Editor: **Susanne Washburn**
Business Manager: **Gregory Wilpert**
Poetry: **Rosemary Deen**
Screen: **Richard Alleva** *Stage:* **Celia Wren** *Columnists:* **John Garvey, Abigail McCarthy, E.J. Dionne, Jr., Sidney Callahan, William Pfaff, Daniel Callahan, Jo McGowan**
Intern: **Christopher Ruddy**
Staff: **Harriette Balsky, Sandra Smith, Elia M.C. Johns**
Advertising Manager: **Ruth E. Taylor**
Publisher Emeritus: **Edward S. Skillin**

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly except Christmas/New Year's; and monthly July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 405, New York, NY 10115. Telephone: (212) 662-4200. E-mail: commonweal@msn.com. Web: http://www.commonwealmagazine.org. Fax: (212) 662-4183. Display advertising correspondence should be sent to Ruth E. Taylor, 11 Graffam Rd., So. Portland, ME 04106 (207) 799-4387, classified advertising correspondence to 475 Riverside Dr. POSTMASTER: send address changes to Commonweal, 475 Riverside Dr., Room 405, New York, NY 10115.

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest, and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Wooster, OH 44691. *Commonweal* articles also are available at many libraries and research facilities on CD-ROM and in electronic data bases. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional offices. Copyright © 1999 Commonweal Foundation. Single Copy, $2.50. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $44; Canada, $47; foreign, $50. Special two-year rate: U.S. $75; Canada, $81; foreign, $87. Annual rates for air-mail delivery outside U.S.: Western Hemisphere, $84; Europe, $89; other parts of the world, $99. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank.

Illustrations: Cover design: Christopher Young, art: Reuters; p. 3, Mac, Rothco; p. 3, © Estate of Margaret Bourke-White/The Margaret-Bourke White Papers, Syracuse University; pp. 6, 7, Charlot; pp. 11, 29, Rothco; pp. 12, 14, Valerry; p. 19, Lorey Sebastian; p. 22, Schwadron, Rothco; p. 27, Patricia Kelly; columnist portraits, Elaine Mills.

http://www.commonwealmagazine.org

Cornwell's popes

A front-page story in the Sunday, October 17 *New York Times* alerted readers to the arrest of thirteen Iranian Jews accused of spying for Israel. The prospect of show trials designed to inflame anti-Israel feeling among Iran's fundamentalist Muslim majority now threatens that nation's small but venerable Jewish community. "Human-rights groups outside of Iran have suggested that the charges have been trumped up for political reasons," the *Times* ominously reported. "In Iran, spokesmen for Jewish organizations have mostly avoided discussing the case, saying that protests from Jews, here or abroad, would only make matters worse."

On the face of it, the situation presents rather stark choices. If the Iranian Jews are convicted on trumped-up charges and hanged by Iran's "revolutionary" court, those who publicly protested the arrests may be accused of having indeed made "matters worse." On the other hand, if the quiet negotiations of Iran's Jewish community save the thirteen, the wisdom of exercising prudence and pursuing diplomacy in the face of lethal hostility will be vindicated. If quiet diplomacy fails, however, those who advocated such a course may well be charged with complicity or worse in the state's crimes.

Although such intractable moral tradeoffs are not necessarily exculpatory, it is important to keep them in mind when trying to evaluate the accuracy of John Cornwell's best-selling *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (Viking). Cornwell's widely commented upon book is for the most part a familiar, if compelling, redramatization of the longstanding accusations about Pius's "silence" during the Holocaust. It will not redefine "the entire history of the twentieth century," as advertisements claim. Nor will Cornwell's claim to have uncovered proof of Pius's life-long anti-Semitism stand up to much scrutiny. Pius's determination to put the interests of the institutional church before virtually all other considerations has long been documented, and Cornwell offers little new here. The author's most sensational accusation is that Eugenio Pacelli—elected pope in 1939—cut a deal in March 1933, whereby he silenced Catholic political opposition to the Nazis in return for Hitler signing a concordat with the Vatican. In that context, Cornwell argues that Pacelli could have prevented Hitler from attaining absolute power. But the idea that the Vatican, or German Catholics liberated from the Vatican's malign influence, could have stopped Hitler after his appointment as chancellor in January 1933 is as novel a reading of history as it is false. (Joseph Goebbels stated the Nazi plan plainly in his diary: "Once we have power we will never give it up. They will have to carry our dead bodies out of the ministries.") None of Germany's major institutions, including the Catholic church, can escape responsibility for the collapse of the Weimar Republic. But to place the ultimate blame for Hitler's coming to power on Pius's ascetical shoulders is an almost absurdly simplistic reading of events.

As our reviewer John Morley observes (page 27), Cornwell both exaggerates Pius's power and influence (even accusing him of helping to start World War I!) and refuses to contextualize historically the choices Pacelli faced as Vatican secretary of state and subsequently as pope. Those debilitating flaws, however, did

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not stop James Carroll from publishing a wholly uncritical review of *Hitler's Pope* in the *Atlantic Monthly* (October) or the reviewer in the *New York Times Book Review* (September 26) from similarly swallowing hook, line, and sinker Cornwell's polemical chronicle. Once again, the conventional wisdom seems eager to treat Catholicism and fascism as synonyms. That atavistic instinct risks misdiagnosing Catholicism's current ills while it trivializes both the radical nature of Nazism and the horror of the Holocaust.

Books like Cornwell's cast their critics in the unenviable position of defending Pacelli's dealings with the Nazis. Except for those utterly convinced of Pius's sanctity and diplomatic infallibility, that is a thankless task. Many of Pacelli's actions were indefensible, especially his preference for right-wing authoritarian governments and his refusal to speak out explicitly against Nazi anti-Semitism and genocide. But authoritarian monarchists like Pacelli should not simply be conflated with Nazi totalitarians. Nor, finally, does Pacelli's wrongheaded determination to keep the Vatican neutral during the war make him a perpetrator of Nazi genocide, any more than the Vatican's willingness to act as an arbiter with Serbia during the Kosovo conflict make it an accomplice to ethnic cleansing.

It is one thing to judge a man's actions as fatally flawed in retrospect; it is something else to offer a one-sided indictment disguised as history. But Cornwell does not stop there. He does something worse. *Hitler's Pope* is finally a book not about Pacelli but about the battle now being fought within the church over the power of the modern papacy. In an effort to forestall Pius's ill-considered canonization and to discredit what he sees as an authoritarian resurgence within the church, Cornwell is willing to indict Pacelli for the political ascension of Hitler and a malicious indifference to the fate of the Jews. Then, in his concluding chapters, he explicitly links John Paul II's papacy to Pacelli's absolutist model in a way that ignores both the Second Vatican Council and John Paul's own steadfast endorsement of liberal democracy. "Pacelli's failure to respond to the enormity of the Holocaust was more than a personal failure," Cornwell argues. "It was a failure of the papal office itself and the prevailing culture of Catholicism." In other words, Cornwell links the church's hierarchical structure, and especially the Petrine office, to fascism, implying that the spirit of political absolutism is again flourishing in the church under John Paul.

These are execrable charges that should be laughed out of the court of public opinion. They should be especially repellent to those who rightly question John Paul's sometimes unpersuasive theological conclusions and peremptory style. Is there an unhealthy concentration of power in the papacy today? Certainly. Should local Catholic churches exert more authority in the selection of bishops and in the development of doctrine? Absolutely. Should the pope seek greater solidarity with, rather than obedience from, his fellow bishops? Yes. But these distortions in Catholic practice must be debated on their own ecclesiological and theological merits. Whatever traditionalists or radical reformers may think, Pacelli would find the papacy and church of John Paul a foreign land. Portraying Pius XII as not merely a dupe but as a soulmate of the Nazis to clinch a case against John Paul II as "a traditionalist autocrat as despotic in his management of the church as Pacelli ever was," is an abuse of reason and history.

Those who strive to bring the injustices of the past to light have no excuse for perpetrating injustices of their own.

ELEPHANT DUNG ■ What is *Commonweal*'s position on the never-ending controversy between New York Mayor Rudolf Giuliani and the Brooklyn Museum of Art over the allegedly obscene and perhaps anti-Catholic paintings in the museum's "Sensation" exhibit? The editor has released the following statement: "New Yorkers know dung when they see it, and they're not going to pay for it when they can get it for free."

Any questions?

SCHOLARSHIP & FAITH ■ University of Notre Dame church historian George Marsden has stirred the latest round of discussion about the relationship of faith and learning with his provocatively (and ironically) titled book, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*. Writing in the July 16, 1999, *Times Literary Supplement*, Robert Darnton, professor of history at Princeton and a leading scholar on eighteenth-century France, treats one example of such scholarship as anything but outrageous. Darnton is reviewing the two-volume *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France* (Oxford, Clarendon) that caps the extraor-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dinary scholarly career of John McManners.

McManners, now Regius professor emeritus of ecclesiastical history at Oxford, is probably best known to nonspecialists for his work on modern church-state relations in France, as well as for the *Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, which he edited. Darnton convincingly illustrates how McManners has transformed the history of what might appear to be one of French Catholicism's most lackluster centuries into nothing less than the sort of thing a reader might want to curl up with and savor. But Darnton goes further. "There is an additional quality in McManners's work, which lifts it above the standard variety of English erudition," the reviewer delcares. "It is faith."

McManners, you see, is also the current chaplain of All Souls College, Oxford, and Darnton quotes a moving 1996 sermon in which McManners described how the stark sight of slaughtered German soldiers during World War II's fierce North African campaign fixed him on the path to ordination.

"It does not follow that the leap of faith will provide an answer to the inadequacy of empiricism," Darnton continues. "But faith helped McManners approach his subject with a capacity lacking in ordinary academic history: sympathetic understanding. Perhaps Christians can write the history of Christianity with the sort of insight that has inspired some Marxist histories of the working class. In McManners's case, at least, spiritual engagement balances empirical erudition and carries his work beyond the limits of conventional academic writing."

Sympathetic understanding will not substitute for the lifetime of study that went into *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, Darnton is quick to add. But together they can produce passages like the one he cites: "Groping on the underside of ecclesiastical history, we come into touch with rural France, and with the peasants, the vast majority of the population. Their role was to pay. Along rutted lanes, paths through cornfields, and sheep tracks in the mountains, we meet continually a multitude of weather-beaten figures, a spectacle of broken teeth, gnarled hands, rags, clogs, coarse woolen stockings, and homespun cloaks. These folk not only support the church; they constitute it and justify its existence. If we can discover how they believed and felt, and what charity and hope religion brought into their living and their dying, this would be the quintessential ecclesiastical history—a history which, alas, will largely remain unwritten, though on a plane not accessible to terrestrial historians it is recorded and will not be forgotten."

From the archives

Throughout 1999, Commonweal *has been celebrating its 75th anniversary. Here from the November 15, 1963 issue is an excerpt from Claire Huchet Bishop's column on children's books.*

A child's factual and technical curiosity does not constitute his whole make-up nor does it sum up his entire longing. He is also eager for release of his imagination, a feeling of his fancy, an escape for his mind into the possibilities of an adventure, enchantment with rhythm, a discovery in human relationship, a glimpse at inner meaning, a probing of himself. Up to the age of twelve, are not "real books" for him those which meet best that fundamental, humanist hunger? Everybody knows that, and yet there is the seemingly frantic race for cramming more and more formal knowledge in children's minds, even during leisure hours, thereby threatening the free flight of the spirit....

A distressing number of stories are not created—they are fabricated. In fact, one can well foresee the day when machines could turn them out better and faster than so-called writers....Yet [this] treason is more despicable than that of writers for adults, especially in today's world when the collective means for the human race's destruction are in the hands of men. Children of today will be in command tomorrow. Sheer technical knowledge will be absolutely necessary, while shallowness and futility may endanger the whole of mankind. Children need to store respect, understanding, concern for human destiny in such a way that these may stand them in good stead later when they have to face the kind of planetary demands the coming age will thrust upon them.

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SIDNEY CALLAHAN

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT

Maybe snake oil works

If my eyes don't stop watering and itching I'm going to go to an acupuncturist. But will I tell my doctor? He, God bless him, has cured my hyperthyroid condition (Graves disease) by burning out my thyroid with radiation and prescribing a daily dose of Synthroid. Yet this medicine doesn't deter the antibody that attacks my eyes.

A chronic health problem that medicine has trouble controlling presents a perfect occasion to try alternative medicine or AM. I won't be alone. In 1997 more than 42 percent of Americans used some form of alternative medicine, and consumers made 629 million visits to alternative practitioners. They paid more than $27 billion out of pocket to do so. When asked why they use AM, patients, a.k.a. clients or consumers, report that it works.

In the past I would dismiss such reports out of hand. As my doctor still does. Yet, I too am a science-loving true believer in reason. When I appeared in my doctor's office with a copy of *The Skeptical Inquirer* I scored points, then doubled my advantage by being the first of his patients to recognize the picture of Richard Feynman, the physicist, hanging next to his desk. Yes, I reported, I always quote Feynman to my students, "Science is about not fooling yourself." (Of course, I also quote Saint Augustine who said that one thing he could know for sure is that he didn't want to be deceived.) I told my doctor that I read atheistic humanist magazines because I was a religious believer and felt duty bound to do so. You know, like Baron von Hügel who claimed Christians should study science in order to cultivate a healthy, nonsuperstitious faith. Hence I am now willing to explore AM only because it seems reasonable to do so.

While I have changed my mind, AM's critics still hurl charges of "quackery," "snake oil," a "holistic hoax"—an irrational aberration that is dangerously unscientific. But many others in conventional medicine have begun to accept some forms of AM and to collaborate with alternative practitioners. Today we hear of integrated medicine or CAM, complementary and alternative medicine. Why the change?

Cynics assert that a power struggle between conventional medicine and AM is taking place motivated by money. Consumer pressure and booming profits explain movements to integrate AM into conventional medical systems. Granted, the history of American medicine provides many instances of greed in which one group of powerful physicians organized to drive out other differently trained physicians and health practitioners by labeling them "unscientific." In other unacknowledged maneuvers, treatments pioneered by AM are co-opted and assimilated into conventional medicine.

Surely struggles over money, status, and hegemony appear always and everywhere, but something else appears to be going on in the acceptance of CAM. There's been a change in the intellectual weather. Modern medicine's positivist vision of a deterministic materialistic world is cracking under the strain of new discoveries in physics, psychology, and the philosophy of science. Good-by, Descartes; so long, Newton; farewell, dualism. The body can no longer be confidently assessed as a biological machine completely separated from the workings of the mind and consciousness. Repairing physiological mechanisms is different from healing a person.

Many conventional physicians are renewing their interest in the art of medicine and healing. They recognize that conventional medicine is not now, and never has been, as scientific as it claimed to be. Evidence-based medicine is a new movement to research scientifically which treatments actually work. The gold standard of experimentation is a series of randomized controlled trials that test the efficacy of a treatment. But such trials take time and money, and are beset with many of the conceptual problems that plague all research. In any event, a generally efficacious treatment has to be used by a physician on a unique patient with a distinctive history living in specific circumstances. Making good medical decisions is an art.

It's also becoming clear to science that much of the healing that takes place in conventional medicine centers on the doctor-patient relationship and the mysterious placebo effect. For some reason, individual expectations of being helped make treatments, even fake treatments, more effective. But no one understands why. Belief may stimulate the body's self-healing capacities or interact in some way with drugs or other interventions. Some observers hypothesize that people use alternative medicine because it produces more reliable placebo effects, in addition to other benefits.

I contend that, once you know about the placebo effect and new pluralistic developments in science, the use of alternative medicine isn't irrational. Many treatments may not be able to pass rigorous scientific testing but will still work for some people in some circumstances. If these so-called "fragile therapies" sometimes work, and are not harmful, why not try them? As long as an AM treatment is not toxic and does not require repudiating conventional medicine, it can be a reasonable choice.

Indeed, Western medicine may have a lot to learn from AM's holistic approach to healing persons. Anyone who has been hospitalized recently and been treated as if they were no more than their disease can see why holistic alternative healing looks attractive. Worse still, the sterile aspects of materialistic medicine, with its technological fixations and obsessive specialization, have been exacerbated by the adoption of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

market methods of management.

By contrast, while AM is a huge heterogeneous enterprise, almost all practitioners take the individual's uniqueness seriously. Clients are asked about their whole life and current environment, and expected to take responsibility for their health. The spiritual nature of persons is not ignored and spiritual transcendent healing forces are often invoked. (I'll deal with the theological implications of AM in a future column.) Like good conventional physicians, AM practitioners want to employ interventions that "work." But AM focuses upon what works for the patient from the patient's own point of view. No more "successful operations" where the patient dies.

AM may be tapping into some healing forces of human consciousness that science has not yet explored. I don't believe in Chinese medicine's assumptions of Chi, but I do believe in placebo effects. The fact that I don't accept the materialistic world view of much of modern medicine doesn't stop me from taking my pills. By their fruits you shall know them. Here's to eyes that can see *sans* tears. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

BOOKS AT THE MILLENNIUM

Have they a future?

Although there are many who argue cogently that the new millennium begins on January 1, 2001 rather than on January 1, 2000, their arguments are being overwhelmed by the proliferation of current millennial celebrations and observances.

One of the earliest of these, in fact, was held on October 17, 1998, by Washington's Cosmos Club members, a symposium on "The Book: Past, Present, and Future," planned as the first of a series of such millennial observances. Why study the book? One of the best reasons given is the important role books have played in achieving and detecting continuity in a culture. The symposium began with a definition of the book and continued with its history.

A book is defined in the terms of symposium speaker Bernard Knox as a "portable object recording a text that can be easily read by anyone with an elementary education and can be reproduced in identical form in multiple copies." As such, the book has been around since the first centuries of the first millennium, initially in the form of papyrus scrolls, but, by the end of the second century, in the form of papyrus pages stitched together and called a *codex* by the Romans. (A *codex* is our form of the book.)

The great literatures of Greece and Rome were recorded and circulated on papyrus scrolls. According to Knox, the famous library at Alexandria had eight scrolls of the poems of Sappho of Lesbos, scrolls of the Homeric poems, and 250 of the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. As evidence that the Athenian society took books and reading for granted, Knox quotes Aristophanes who had the chorus assure the audience of one of his comedies: "Everyone is holding his little book so he can follow the subtle allusions." He notes that Martial speaks of the bookshops of Rome and that Augustus founded libraries to hold the "enormous literary and philosophical heritage of Greco-Roman civilization."

Papyrus is perishable and much of this literature was lost as centuries went by and ancient literature was transferred to parchment and vellum, more durable but much more expensive material and as such available only to an elite. Because of this and the barbarian invasions, only a selection of these classics survived by the time of the Renaissance. But that selection is the foundation of the literature known to us in the West today.

Although the second speaker at the symposium, Sören Edgren, University of Stockholm Sinologist, described an East Asian book culture that produced paper and printing *several centuries* before they were known in the West, his information is but a side issue when considering the continuity of our own culture. The chief connection is the emergence of paper in China and its arrival in the West via the high Arabic culture of southern Spain. As Knox had pointed out, paper—as the material for the new invention of the printing press—added to portability and legibility an affordability that made books available to a wide audience undreamed of in earlier centuries.

No matter what their affordability, however, possessing books depended on their distribution. Symposium speaker Calhoun Winton pointed out that distribution was a real problem for our early settlers, some of whom, according to a seventeenth-century Maryland clergyman, were "addicted to reading." In earliest colonial times, settlers brought books in their luggage, ordered them from elsewhere, or were sent them by persons or organizations in the Old World. Obviously they valued them. Winton told the charming story of a minor planter, Robert Cole, who, before he returned to England on family business, left a will and inventory of his possessions for the benefit of his seven children, should he not survive. In the inventory he listed "Seaven books in a chest, six other books left out for children to read...." He did not survive, but his children grew up literate among those books.

Charles Carroll of Carrollton, signer of the Declaration of Independence, when reading law in London, had his father send him his grandfather's law library, and presumably took the library back when he returned to Maryland. Thus these treasured books crossed the At-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lantic three times. Carroll continued to order books from London and sternly advised his agent, who joked about the size of his bill, "Money cannot be laid out better, in my opinion, than in the purchase of valuable books."

Evidently his fellow colonists agreed. Winton notes that shipments from Britain were recorded in weight, and that during the 1760s, the port of Annapolis in any given year was receiving thousands of pounds of books. Gradually, of course, the colonies developed printing and publishing of their own.

Today that printing and publishing has grown into a huge industry. Book agent Deborah Grovenor told the symposium that people are buying more books than ever, and spending more on them than on competing media. And, since only about one percent of these books are best sellers, it is clear that a lot of books get published that were not intended to be best sellers. In addition, new small publishing houses and some university presses are seeing to it that "intelligent, worthy books" not big enough for big publishers will still be available to many readers interested in them.

This is astonishingly good news for those of us who have worried that the book is disappearing. Literary journalist Michael Dirda was not alone when he wrote (*Washington Post Book World*, October 3, 1999), "I am genuinely worried. Who will read the books I cherish? Who will keep alive the writers I revere?" There are hundreds worrying, too, most of them about the effects of technology on the future of the book.

Kenneth Arnold, president of New Century Communications, which provides electronic support for nonprofit and educational organizations, has an answer for us. "I think the community of the book, which is the printed book..., is a very real community. The on-line community participates in the community of the book, grows out of it, is used to distribute books, and yet adds something new to it in terms of immediacy, connectivity, linkage to other books and ideas, bringing into play items that you ordinarily wouldn't have access to, and bringing into the conversation people in other parts of the world and other cultures that ordinarily you wouldn't have access to."

That may be so but let the emphasis be on "the community of the book." Nothing can replace it. This is what Robert Barnett, chair of the Library Committee at the Cosmos Club, was saying when he introduced the symposium. "Books are special....All kinds of bad things have happened to books over the ages, but they have survived. They have done so because they represent knowledge, they represent adventure, they represent fantasy, pathos, drama, humor, solace, intellectual challenge. They communicate person to person. They touch all the emotions we have."

They are certainly worth our consideration as we review the past millennium and look to the future. □

Edward McGlynn Gaffney, Jr.

RELIGION & THE COURT

Between expression & establishment

The Supreme Court has opened its doors for another term and has on its docket an important case involving the First Amendment's religion clause. *Mitchell* v. *Helms* will be heard on December 1, and the Court will rule on it next spring. The case involves a popular federal program providing assistance to state and local educational agencies to purchase and lend nonideological materials such as computers to public and nonpublic schools. A group of taxpayers has challenged the program as impermissible because it advances religion in violation of the prohibition of an establishment of religion.

If all the Court had to do was to reach back to clear precedents to resolve *Mitchell*, it would be easy to predict the outcome. Alas, the Court's First Amendment precedents touching on religion have, until fairly recently, been in disarray. Berkeley law professor Jesse Choper calls this area of the Court's work "*ad hoc* judgments which are incapable of being reconciled on any principled basis." For example, the Court ruled that it is permissible for the government to provide books to students attending religious schools. However, in another case the Court ruled that it is impermissible to lend instructional items such as tape recorders and maps. The drawing of a constitutional line between books and maps led Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) to wonder famously what the Court might opine about an atlas.

In recent decisions, though, the Court has been inching toward greater clarity and consistency. In the latest effort to speak to this issue, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor explained in 1997 that there is no impermissible financial incentive to advance religion when "aid is allocated on the basis of neutral, secular criteria that neither favor nor disfavor religion, and is made available to both religious and secular beneficiaries on a nondiscriminatory basis." The *Mitchell* case affords the Court an opportunity to apply the nondiscrimination principle to the specific question of providing computers to all students, in public and private schools, including religious schools.

Educators in religious schools have filed a brief offering three reasons to uphold the federal program. First, computers are an effective tool to enable students to undertake research and to write more cogently and effectively. Second, computers and books are functionally equivalent as alternative means of transmitting texts. Third, important long-term economic benefits flow from training in computer skills. The denial of a nonideological benefit like computers could thus be viewed as a penalty on the exercise of parental liberty to choose a religious school for their children, which the Court protected as early as 1925.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But little seems to be straightforward about this area of the law. At its first session this year the Court announced that it would not grant review in a case from Arizona that sustained a state program allowing a $500 tax credit for tuition payments to religious schools. Last year the Court left standing a lower-court decision sustaining the Milwaukee parental-choice program, which gives low-income parents an opportunity to have their children educated outside that city's embattled public schools. Both of these programs will continue to function, and both will provide data enabling legislators around the country to determine which approach to funding education, if either, seems appropriate.

The Court has not yet decided whether to hear another case in which the Maine Supreme Court ruled that parents are not entitled to state reimbursement of tuition for educating their children in religious schools. The mere fact that the Court denied review in the Arizona case is no guarantee that it will not decide to hear the Maine case. In the past, the Court has often taken cases in which the lower courts have denied a benefit to persons attending religious schools. Recent examples touching on this problem also include payment for tuition at a Bible college for a blind student to become a youth minister, provision of a sign language interpreter at a Catholic high school for a student with severe hearing impairment, and inclusion of a religious newspaper within a student-fee fund at a state university. In all three instances the lower courts denied the benefit, and the Supreme Court reversed those judgments and allowed the benefit. In all three instances, moreover, the aid was available to a broad class of beneficiaries. The vocational rehabilitation funding was available to all blind persons. Sign language interpreters were available not just to students attending religious schools, but to students in public schools as well. And the state university allowed the use of student-fee funds for a variety of religious and cultural activities, making its denial of the funds for a Christian newspaper seem discriminatory. Still, the very fact that the lower courts denied a benefit to a party seeking it can also be read as evidence that there is no favoritism toward a particular religion or—to use the legal term of art that Justice O'Connor coined—no "endorsement" of religion by the lower courts.

Another major issue the Court has wrestled with over the past half-century is the role of religion in the public schools. In 1948 the Court invalidated an interfaith program in which parents opted to have their children take religious instruction for an hour a week from a priest, minister, or rabbi inside the public school. Four years later, stating, "We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being," the Court upheld a program in which parents could opt to send their children for religious instruction off the premises of the school. In the 1960s the Court invalidated the recitation of a government-composed prayer, as well as the devotional reading of the Bible or recitation of the Lord's Prayer. No cases from the Warren Court—not even the school desegregation case—caused more public furor and open resistance by school boards all over the country. Repeated efforts to amend the Constitution on this point failed, but only just barely.

"Isn't this a **terrific** *coincidence, your honor?"*

A compromise was reached in 1984 with the federal Equal Access Act, which allowed students to meet voluntarily for prayer on the premises of public schools on the same basis as other noncurricular groups such as chess clubs. The Court sustained that legislation, but the squabbling over prayer in public schools did not go away. In 1992 the Court ruled that the First Amendment was violated when a public school official invited a rabbi to offer a benediction at a public school commencement. The Court has declined to decide whether student-led prayer at graduation exercises is likewise impermissible.

In a case from Texas, the Court has again been asked to rule on the constitutionality of student-led prayer at public school graduations and football games. The lower court ruled that student-led "nonsectarian and nonproselytizing" prayer at graduations is permissible, but that prayers at football games are not. Knowing how seriously Texans regard both Friday-night high-school football and earnest prayer for the avoidance of personal injury in these contests, Texas Governor George W. Bush has signed an *amicus* brief urging the Court to grant review in the case.

The chance that the Court may take the Texas case was improved by a ruling in July by an appellate court that Alabama public schools not only may but must permit student-led prayers with explicitly religious content at football games. To forbid student-led religious speech on such occasions, that court ruled, would be "the most egregious form of content-based censorship."

Both the Texas school speech case—if the Court decides to review it—and the computer-aid case afford the Court an opportunity to shed some light on what it means by the nondiscrimination principle. A benefit provided even-handedly to all children, whether attending public schools or religious schools, does not seem to violate the First Amendment. The Court may use the same rationale to allow speech by students on public school campuses on a variety of themes, provided that no government official influences the content or viewpoint of the student speakers. □

Edward McGlynn Gaffney, Jr., *a frequent contributor, is professor of law at Valparaiso University.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEVER AGAIN?

The church & genocide in Rwanda

André Sibomana

André Sibomana, a Rwandan Catholic priest, journalist, and human-rights activist who was an outspoken critic of both past and present Rwandan governments, died in March 1998. His book Hope for Rwanda *was published in France in 1997. Now translated into English, the book consists of interviews with Sibomana by two French journalists. This excerpt focuses on the role of the Catholic church during the 1994 tribal genocide in Rwanda, largely perpetrated by the majority Hutu against the minority Tutsi. In the aftermath of the killings, the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front defeated Hutu forces and took control of the nation.*

■ LAURE GUILBERT & HERVÉ DEGUINE: Some people accuse the church of having actively participated in the ideological preparation of the genocide; others have called into question the behavior of several priests during the killings. Whatever we may think of these accusations, we can't help wonder about the role of the church.

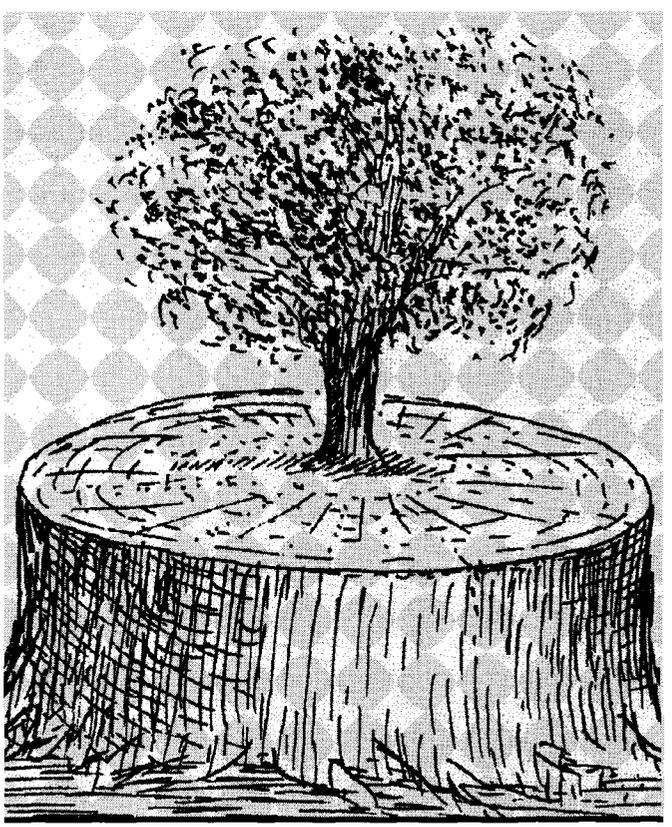
■ ANDRÉ SIBOMANA: There is no doubt that the Roman Catholic church did not live up to its moral responsibility in the years which preceded the genocide. It's a reality which no one can deny. Actually priests were among the first to denounce this weakness, long before the genocide....

In December 1991, priests from the diocese of Kabgayi published a forty-page document, "Let Us Convert to Live Together in Peace. " In this document, they attacked the passive attitude of the church in the face of "mismanagement of public funds, corruption, social injustice, individual freedoms, the war, and AIDS." In early 1992, a pastoral letter took up the same arguments and called for a meeting of a national conference. When I received Cardinal Roger Etchegaray [president of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace] in May 1993, this is what I said in my speech:

> Your Eminence, let me be frank with you: In the context of human-rights violations, the main moral authority in the country, namely the Roman Catholic church, should have made every effort to rectify the situation and revive people's consciences. Instead, it has distinguished itself by its complicit silence and its absence in the most stricken places. The cry of distress of the people of God has not always been heard in time; and with a few exceptions, Roman Catholic officials have lost their credibility because of their complacent attitude toward the state.

As you can see, there was deep unease within the church. A few of us were aware of this and wanted to find a way to go forward. In my capacity as director of *Kinyamateka*, the church's organ of social communication, I had several clashes with the archbishop of Kigali, Vincent Nsengiyumva, who...had been a member of the MRND central committee [Rwanda's ruling party from 1978 to 1994] and remained a close friend of Juvénal Habyarimana [the MRND leader and Hutu Rwandan president whose assassination precipitated the outbreak of the genocide].

The church did nothing to prevent tragedies which it could have prevented. When the bishops were informed that a genocide was about to happen, when they saw the increase in



This article is adapted from Hope for Rwanda *by* **André Sibomana***: Conversations with Laure Guilbert and Hervé Deguine, translated by Carina Tertsakian, Foreword by Alison Des Forges. Originally published in French by Desclée de Brouwer, 1997. Published in English with a postscript by Pluto Press, 1999. Reprinted with the permission of Pluto Press.* *All rights reserved.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

killings in the period leading up to the genocide—on average five every night—their attitude didn't change. The leaders of the church stood by the government, particularly the bishops of Kigali and Byumba. They failed to react in an appropriate way toward the role of the government in the preparation of the genocide. They should have broken away.

But the church is not just made up of the hierarchy. President Habyarimana, most of the army, most of the judges, ministers, and prefects were Roman Catholics. The fact that society was unable to prevent the catastrophe shows that there was a fundamental breakdown. Christians shouldn't just suffer a situation; they have a responsibility to take control.

Did the church take part in the ideological preparation of the genocide? No, certainly not. The basis for such an accusation is purely political. Rwanda was converted to Roman Catholicism from the top down: The first missionaries started by converting the chiefs—mostly Tutsi—in order to accelerate the conversion of the masses. Until the 1950s, the church relied primarily on the Tutsi elite which provided most of the clergy. Then things changed. For various reasons...Hutu started achieving recognition or assumed a more important place in society. The church played an active role in this process which culminated in the social revolution of 1959. Since then, some circles of Tutsi, who are descendants of those who were ousted at that time, have viewed the Roman Catholic church as a traitor and an enemy and have accused it of supporting what they call "Hutu ideology"—the intellectual movement which campaigned for the liberation of the oppressed Hutu people.

The church did not plan the genocide on an ideological level, but there is no doubt that, as among the politicians, the military, and the United Nations, the weakness of the church's reactions to daily violence prepared people psychologically to accept violence as something normal. It is not a collective or diffuse form of responsibility; each person must examine his or her own conscience. But there's no point in demonizing an institution...it does not help move the debate forward.

■ **GUILBERT & DEGUINE:** What was the role of the church during the war and during the massacres?

■ **SIBOMANA:** The church was hit hard by the war, by the genocide, then by the massacres....One of the very first killings of the genocide took place at the Christus Center at Remera on April 7, 1994. Seventeen people were killed, including priests, religious officials, and nuns. Among the victims was the Jesuit father who used to hear Habyarimana's confessions; perhaps this explains the massacre. I also see it as a symbol of the collapse of our country into a barbaric state. Other religious officials were also killed later. In total, 3 bishops, 103 priests, 40 religious brothers, 60 nuns, and countless believers and members of congregations were killed in various circumstances.

As I said, part of the church did not live up to its moral, spiritual, political, or economic responsibility. But another part of the church managed to confront the hardships; it

New CHA Book:

"A Treasure To Be Shared as a Gift"

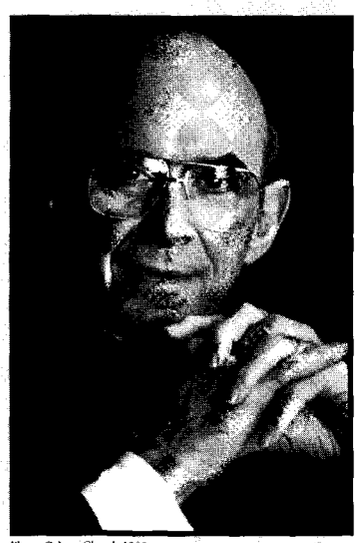


Photo © Jean Clough 1995

Celebrating the Ministry of Healing

JOSEPH CARDINAL BERNARDIN'S REFLECTIONS ON HEALTHCARE

Cardinal Bernardin's reflections on healthcare, the consistent ethic of life, the ministry's covenant with patients and society, the pre-eminent position of not-for-profit healthcare, and managed care offer not only hope but, in the Cardinal's words, "a sense of security and satisfaction in order to find the healing that only faith in the Lord can bring."

Reviewer's Comments:

"In these pages, we hear once again the compelling and compassionate voice of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin. Created in the image of God, each and every person is endowed with inherent and irrevocable dignity. The mission of Catholic healthcare is rooted in this conviction; it's future depends upon fidelity to it."

His Eminence
Roger Cardinal Mahony
Archbishop of Los Angeles

Celebrating the Ministry of Healing
Catalog No. 131/6" x 9"
151 pages/paper/1999
ISBN 0-87125-255-4

- ❑ $22 each — 1-5 copies
- ❑ $20 each — 6-10 copies
- ❑ $18 each — 11 or more copies

Call 314-253-3458

CHA
THE CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

10% Discount if you mention this ad!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

emerged strengthened, and—had there not been such a trail of bloodshed and pain—I would say that it could be proud of its behavior on many occasions, as well as that of its officials and congregations.

I don't accept the generalization which states that the Roman Catholic church participated in the genocide. Because this church—and I say so with the eyes of a believer—is above all a divine institution, a reality which transcends, a place of salvation. It is not the church as such which is called into question, but its members. The church is composed of a hierarchy, which starts from the level of the lay believer and goes right up to the pope. And what did the pope do? Some claim he couldn't do anything. I don't know. The fact is that when Cardinal Etchegaray came to Rwanda, the massacres stopped wherever he went.

Regarding the Roman Catholic clergy, I don't know of any priest who took up a machete to kill. Priests were seen carrying arms. Were they intending to use them to kill or to protect? I don't have the answer. I know one priest who organized training sessions for young people in his parish. Was it sports training or paramilitary preparation? Was he preparing militia or a self-defense guard? What I know is that the same priest protected Tutsi in the major seminary.

The White Fathers [Western missionaries] were present in large numbers in Rwanda. All or most of them left. Did they leave out of cowardice or obligation?...Before you make a judgment—if you think you have the right to make one—you must remember that at that time people were not counting in days, but in hours. No one is obliged to be a hero or to remain a hero for long.

Some believers were weak and irresponsible: They did not weigh the consequences of their actions. I asked one of my parishioners who carried a grenade, "What are you doing?" He replied, "Don't you understand the situation we're in? We'll think about religion later." The killers included believers and nonbelievers, lucid people and people under the effect of drugs; some were acting of their own free will, others because they were forced or terrorized. Among the killers, there were Christians; among the victims too. Many victims felt completely abandoned and probably lost their faith at the fateful moment. But others discovered faith through this tragic experience. Many people died as they sought protection in religious buildings; many more survived by turning toward the people of God. People risked their lives—and often lost them—trying to save their neighbor. They too represent the church.

It makes me indignant when the church is criticized on the basis of the weakness of a few, whereas many others died trying to protect people who were being pursued, or even just staying at their side until the end to testify to their love for Christ....

I have the feeling—which is supported by certain facts—that people attack part of the clergy because it constitutes a counterpower.... Some priests were eliminated—I mean physically eliminated—because they had seen too much or because they knew too much.

GUILBERT & DEGUINE: Since the genocide, has the church—the clergy and the believers—set about examining its own conscience?

SIBOMANA: I'm not in a position to make a statement about the church overall. But I can describe what happened in my own diocese. Some believers handed me back their baptismal certificates. A number of Tutsi seminarians who survived the genocide gave up their vocation. They still believe in God, but have lost confidence in religious institutions. Many of them now devote their time to relieving the suffering of other survivors. Others still believe, but have stopped coming to church....But there are others whose faith has deepened....

During the period of mourning, which lasted until Christmas 1994, we suspended the administration of sacraments—baptisms, Communions, and weddings—with the exception of the Eucharist....Every parishioner "who knew he had killed" was asked not to receive Communion any more and to come to the confessional to give a full and sincere explanation as to how the sin was committed as well as any mitigating or aggravating circumstances. We have to show an interest in human beings individually and stop treating them en masse.

In the diocese of Kabgayi we set up a special procedure. We created a specific pastoral policy, the "policy of dialogue." Those who wanted to remain in the Roman Catholic church were accepted on condition that each of them stated what they were expecting from religion and expressed, each in their own words, their regrets and the improvements they hoped for....

We were quite far from the intention expressed by some White Fathers, who had come back after the massacres, to rebuild in an identical way, without learning from our failures. That would have been absurd. Of course, we had to bury the dead and build from the ruins. But this couldn't be done as if we were dealing with an earthquake or a hurricane. The hurricane had been inflicted by human hands, and it was human beings, their relatives, their families, and their neighbors who had to be reintegrated into society. Of course, there must be trials and lawful justice. But the law is not enough and will never be enough to rebuild the social fabric. I have been accused of rejecting the jus-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tice of the courts by preaching the justice of hearts. But the two are not exclusive. The law must be respected, but it will not conquer the root of evil. We must search for what has failed and find the fiber which is waiting to be revived at the bottom of our souls.

■ GUILBERT & DEGUINE: From a more personal point of view, did these events ever shake your conscience as a priest or your faith as a believer?

■ SIBOMANA: I have never questioned my faith and I have never doubted. But through bloodshed and tears I have discovered that the path of truth is not necessarily a path of happiness. It is not God who makes me question, it is man. God created us as free beings. He is not responsible for what we do with this freedom. He shows us the way; it is not he who makes us stray from it. Some people raise doubts and think that God has abandoned them because they have suffered grave injustices or cruel situations. Many Jews had the same feeling and the same reflections during the Shoah.

Has God abandoned us? I can't answer this question. It is a metaphysical and individual question. As far as I am concerned, as a human being, as a believer, and as a priest, I try to find the right path, to follow it and to lead others along it....

I am convinced that for many, the genocide was a "lapse" along the way. This does not diminish their responsibility in any way, nor does it mitigate the cruelty of what happened. But it's important for the children of those who killed to know that they are not damned and that their future has not been set in stone. If they are careful and if they learn to beware of manipulators, they will not fall into the same traps. Those who [after the genocide] are constantly reiterating on the radio or in newspapers that all Hutu are bad and are killers are seriously endangering the future and are pushing the most fragile to become what they are accused of being.

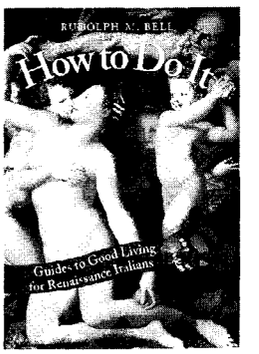
■ GUILBERT & DEGUINE: How do you see the future of the church and of Roman Catholicism in Rwanda?

■ SIBOMANA: Rwanda has just been through a particularly dark page of its history. It's not the first; we must make sure it's the last.

The attitude of some believers and church officials has been unworthy and quite rightly creates confusion in people's minds. There are many problems for us to overcome, some of them new problems. We have to confront fear, ignorance, and the distrust which has driven people apart. Society has been devastated by poverty, injustice, and a spirit of accusation—not to mention the culture of violence, hatred, and revenge. Disbelief and lies have become widespread. The increase in sects is also a challenge.

But we must not lose hope. I will repeat this again: Men and women have sacrificed their lives to save strangers. They acted in the name of faith, in the name of the message of the gospel which they not only learned but lived through, and for which they paid the highest price. These sacrifices are a sign and a hope. We have initiated a new catechesis which aims at deep conversion, revives the heart, preaches repentance, forgiveness, divine mercy, justice, peace, brotherly love,

fall favorites



How to Do It
Guides to Good Living for Renaissance Italians
Rudolph M. Bell
"Bell has rummaged in Italian archives and backrooms for the popular pamphleteers of the day. General advice for the (then newly) literate public has a continuous history right down to Miss Manners.—Dennis O'Brien, *Commonweal*
Cloth $25.00

The Essential Tillich
Paul Tillich
Edited by F. Forrester Church
"With this volume, Paul Tillich joins the ranks of the great Christian theologians such as Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas. . . . This volume, compiled by a noted minister and scholar, offers to the theological student, church worker, or, indeed, any serious reader struggling with the existential question, a tantalizing and illuminating introduction to perhaps the greatest mind of twentieth-century Protestant theology."—*Booklist*
Paper $16.00

Now in paperback
Modern American Religion, Volume 3
Under God, Indivisible, 1941-1960
Martin E. Marty
"Readers desirous of a useful history of American religion in the era of World War II and the Cold War will be delighted by Marty's new volume, as will readers thirsty for instructive and provocative oratory from one of the master rhetoricians of our day."—R. Marie Griffith, *Theology Today*
Paper $22.00

the university of chicago press
5801 South Ellis Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637
www.press.uchicago.edu

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unity, respect for human life, and the practice of the holy commandments. It's a long-term task. It is easier to turn a man into a killer than to educate him in the faith of God. We need time, but the will is there.

However, I am more pessimistic with regard to the ecclesiastical institution. First of all, as we are talking about reconstruction, I think we need to review completely the training for seminarians. Their training is much too theoretical and dogmatic and cut off from the reality of most Rwandans. Second, the clergy, unfortunately, is very divided. Members of the clergy are politicized and often adopt partisan attitudes. This is very unfortunate.

Last but not least in terms of worries, I have noticed with a certain bitterness a strong continuity in the history of the church. Yesterday, its senior officials colluded with the state. The same thing is happening today. Power has changed hands; the ideology is different, but the attitude of the leaders of the church is the same. Instead of looking after the most destitute—those who are suffering and can't see the light at the end of the tunnel—their eyes are fixed on those who run the country and from whom they expect rewards. Just as before, some church officials are closing their eyes to what is happening in the country....Serious human-rights violations are being committed today....and the church, as an institution, is not reacting. Officials know what is happening, but they can't agree on what attitude to adopt. It is as if they have learned nothing from what we have just lived through. □

DEAR BISHOPS

Open letter on *Ex corde ecclesiae*

The current generation in Catholic higher education has been one of growth, debate, and retrieval. It has given rise, especially in the past few years, to a widespread determination that the religious identity of American Catholic colleges and universities is a gift that must be preserved and handed on. That determination has been strengthened by the 1990 apostolic constitution, *Ex corde ecclesiae*. The authors of this letter have all been engaged with *Ex corde* since its early drafts, and have been working to implement it since its promulgation. However, we are concerned that a November vote by the U.S. bishops on the current version of the norms for implementation could hinder our efforts. We offer here a brief reflection on why Catholic higher education will benefit from more time to work out the issues that remain unresolved.

The theology of communion (*communio*) has provided a rich framework for the principles and norms of the *Ex corde* implementation document. The "theology of communion" at Vatican II overcame ecclesiological approaches that tended to be overly juridical. Communion themes were intertwined with a stress on the collegial exercise of authority, on the universal call to holiness, on ecumenical progress, and on human solidarity. "Communion" is used analogically in the council documents to refer to a complex web of relationships. Juridical norms need be framed in the light of how they foster or undermine these relationships. Those who rely on communion themes to justify the institution of new juridical norms need to pay special attention not only to the types of norms that are established, but also to the process by which they are established, as well as to the legitimate practices, customs, and laws particular to an individual culture and country. Attention must also be given beforehand to the type of reception the norms will receive, both from those to whom they apply, and from those whose judgment will affect the standing of Catholic higher education.

On November 16, 1996, the U.S. bishops overwhelmingly (224–6) approved "*Ex corde ecclesiae*: An Application to the United States." The text—the result of a long and fruitful dialogue between bishops and presidents of Catholic colleges and universities—stressed a pastoral approach and a continuation of that dialogue. While praising the document, Rome sent it back to the bishops asking them to "incorporate the necessary juridical elements." A subcommittee composed of canon lawyers produced a new text on October 15, 1998. This new text made explicit various juridical elements, including the necessity of a mandate for a Catholic theologian. Many suggestions were made by the leaders of Catholic colleges and universities and others to improve the text. The members of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities [ACCU] drafted an alternate set of norms, suggesting specific applications for each of the norms included in *Ex corde*. The ACCU believed its suggested norms incorporated the necessary juridical elements. The ACCU text won the full support of the vast majority of presidents. The bishops of the implementation committee, however, chose to present only the text prepared by their own subcommittee.

The bishops' newly revised text for the proposed norms—issued on September 21, 1999— includes a number of improvements. It attempts to retain as much of the *communio* emphasis as possible in a document with explicit juridical norms. The bishops state clearly that the dialogues over the past nine years have been "graced moments," characterized by a genuine openness to a deeper exploration and appropriation of Catholic identity.

The revised text also makes clear that the presidents' concerns about the eligibility of their institutions to receive federal

This open letter was written by the following officials and faculty members of the University of Dayton: **Una M. Cadegan** *(associate professor of history and American studies),* **Dennis M. Doyle** *(associate professor of religious studies),* **Brother Raymond L. Fitz, S.M.** *(president),* **John O. Geiger** *(provost),* **Father James L. Heft, S.M.** *(university professor of faith and culture, and chancellor), and* **Terrence Tilley** *(chairperson of religious studies).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

monies have been heard. It emphasizes "institutional autonomy" and the integrity of secular subjects, and when it urges faculty to respect Catholic doctrine, it adds that this does not mean that "a Catholic university's task is to indoctrinate or proselytize its students." The text indicates that the purpose of the norms is to "assist Catholic colleges and universities in their internal process of reviewing their Catholic identity." These clarifications all indicate a genuine effort to take into consideration a number of difficulties pointed out by the leaders of Catholic colleges and universities.

Despite these improvements, problems remain, problems that we believe work against the theology of communion intended to inform the document. Others have pointed to the expectations that more than 50 percent of the faculty be Catholic, and that the president take the oath of fidelity. We wish to focus here on the requirement that individual theologians seek a *mandatum*. This requirement stands in tension with other elements of the document that better reflect a collegial style and a relationship of mutual trust. The current form of these norms runs counter to the 1996 proposal for implementation worked out by bishops and university presidents, with special concern for what will work best in the academic culture of the United States.

The *mandatum*, in its present form, is likely to have a negative impact on graduate programs in theology at Catholic universities. Perceiving the *mandatum* as an inappropriate limit on academic freedom, better Catholic graduate students may well go in even greater numbers to Yale, Harvard, and Chicago, where they can do Catholic theology with Catholic theologians unfettered by canons 810 and 812. And Catholic graduate programs in theology may well wither.

Moreover, the *mandatum* is likely to lead to legal challenges. Despite the revision's intent to ameliorate problems with the civil law and funding, lawyers disagree about the effect of the *mandatum*. As the supplemental document of the committee states, "while various scholars have written about the meaning of the *mandatum* and how it should be applied since its appearance in the revised Code of Canon Law in 1983, there is little actual experience to guide the proper implementation of the canon." If there is litigation, the costs both for universities and for dioceses will be substantial.

If the current proposal were the only way to ensure the integrity of Catholic theology and to preserve the identity of Catholic universities, voting on it would be a risk worth taking. But viable alternatives exist that accomplish the same goals without risking the serious damage likely to follow approval of the current draft. One fully formulated alternative is the "Structures for Implementation" proposed by the ACCU in April (available on the ACCU website at http://www.accunet.org/excorde/altprops.html). The proposal fully respects the bishop's rights and responsibilities while furthering the networks of dialogue, mutual collaboration, and trust so crucial to the successful implementation of whatever norms the bishops approve.

A local bishop already has the canonical power to address the problems the *mandatum* attempts to deal with. A bishop can and ought to name as un-Catholic the teaching of any individual theologian who, in fact, goes against clearly defined dogma and official teaching. Moreover, a bishop has the right and the responsibility to judge whether a college or university has so far departed from its Catholic mission that it ceases to be Catholic. Of course, neither step should be taken without careful discernment on the part of the bishop, a discernment that should include not only conversation with the individual theologian or the leaders of an institution, but also with other bishops and theologians whose judgment in such matters is known to be sound. In fact, an excellent process for dealing with differences between a bishop and a theologian has already been spelled out in the 1989 document, "Doctrinal Responsibilities: Approaches to Promoting Cooperation and Resolving Misunderstandings between Bishops and Theologians." At what point to make the judgment that an institution no longer is "Catholic" remains unclear. But no one should underestimate the potential effect of a bishop's declaring that the teaching of an individual is inconsistent with Catholic doctrine, or the devastating impact that would follow if the local bishop were to declare that a college or university could no longer be considered Catholic.

The process and the goal of fully implementing *Ex corde* are both best served by norms that preserve and deepen the network of relationships among bishops, theologians, and the leaders of Catholic colleges and universities. Structures such as those proposed by the ACCU have a better chance of doing that than the proposals in the current draft. A vote on the current draft would weaken rather than strengthen the very relationships the draft is trying to preserve since a viable undiscussed alternative exists.

Perhaps the strongest argument against the current proposal is that it is likely to work against its own goals. The implementation of even the strictest norms (which, we have acknowledged, the current draft does not represent) would leave undone much of the work most necessary in safeguarding the Catholic identity of Catholic universities. That work depends on relationships—relationships between faculty and administrators, between Catholic and non-Catholic members of the university community, between members of the university community and the local bishop, between scholars and their professional associations and professional publications. At the heart of Catholic universities that are striving to be truly Catholic and truly universities is this dense network of relationships, most of which will be damaged by an overly juridical approach to *Ex corde*. If these relationships are damaged, much of the work of the past couple of decades to revivify the Catholic identity of Catholic universities will be lost.

That is why our primary plea now is for more time. However pastoral the intentions behind the *mandatum*, it is likely to thwart the development of true *communio* that is well under way on our campus and others. Whether or not the *mandatum* in its present form threatens academic freedom properly understood, in our academic culture it is widely perceived as doing so. The renewed vigor of Catholic intellectual life and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Daddy Long Arms

Back in my hometown, there's a man
(he is old now.)
who would not let go of the coffin
in which his wife lay.
They finally took him by the arms
and moved him back a little.
They thought they had him clear,
but when they dropped the lid
it took off the tips of his fingers.
No one knew till she was buried.
His cry of pain was a cry of grief.
Nobody would look at him
with his balled up fists.
No one saw the blood.
As a boy I would watch him
out of the corner of my eye,
pushing his change to the edge
of the store counter into his palm.
As children, we'd speculate
how long his fingernails grew
in the land of the dead.
We were certain that he could reach out
and bring small things back to life
—birds, houseplants, guinea pigs—
and find anything that was lost
that would fit in his hand.

On the Rise

Not the sun. The sun is only light.
It comes from you,
the friction of your blood through your veins,
the air swept through your lungs and coming out hot,
your moods, the flush of your skin,
and the steam that comes off you,
emitted when you rub against your clothes,
part the air, touch and stroke, rub things together,
shuffle your feet, chew your food, pet the dog.
You give it away when you hand someone change.
It pulses from the flames you set loose,
from the engines you start
to pull the heat out of your refrigerator,
to push the heat out of your house,
to take you away from yourself.
It even pours off of the brakes that stop you from going too far
And setting the world on fire.

Bill Ayres

the Catholic identity of universities require that our colleagues—Catholic, non-Catholic, unbeliever, whatever their disciplines—share our confidence in the compatibility of Catholicism and intellectual work. The *mandatum* in its present form would deal a serious blow to that confidence.

Our request for more time is partly pragmatic: Given the six years between *Ex corde* and the issuance of the first draft norms, and given how much the relationship between the bishops and the universities was strengthened, it seems a rush to vote on the current draft with only six weeks between its being made public and the scheduled poll. We echo the sense of Bishop John D'Arcy (*Origins*, September 23, 1999) that clarifying dialogue between bishops and theologians must "precede rather than follow the steps now being proposed. If it does not precede, how can we expect the setting in place of the mandate to bear positive fruit for the life of the church?" More time won't cost us anything and could benefit us immensely.

Our request is based not on purely pragmatic or procedural issues, but on an assessment of the current historical moment that counsels patience. In some crucial ways, the intellectual encounter of Catholicism with modernity is very recent. Particularly in the fields of philosophy and theology, that encounter began in earnest only one or two scholarly generations ago (in Catholic time, barely yesterday). It was and is an earth-shaking encounter. Catholic philosophy and theology have had to come to grips with the functional atheism of the academy, with religious pluralism, second-wave feminism and the emergence of identity politics, and with the ideological fallout of the collapse of Soviet communism and the apparent global triumph of free-market capitalism. All of these pose challenges to Catholic teaching. At the same time, all are potential arenas of graced encounter.

As faculty and administrators, we accept our responsibility to both church and academy to maintain the Catholic university as university and as Catholic. We want and need the bishops' assistance. This is best accomplished without the *mandatum*, and without a vote on the current draft. We hope we can demonstrate what we are doing on our campuses to enliven Catholic identity. We have helped reshape curricula—interdisciplinary, integrated, humanistic in the best tradition of the Catholic origin of universities—to include and restore the riches of Catholic life and thought. Our faculty speak in a wide variety of scholarly, educational, and pastoral settings on issues crucial to the life of the church. We work enthusiastically with colleagues who are not Catholic, learning from them, hoping they learn from us, reassuring them by our lives and work that a lively Catholic identity supports and enhances an institution's commitment to academic freedom rather than constricts it.

The Catholic identity of Catholic universities, fully realized, is centrally concerned with making the consequences of the Incarnation ever more apparent. Those of us most deeply engaged with the work have benefited from the collaboration with the bishops. We ask for more time to deepen and further that collaboration, and to continue the implementation we have begun together. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Richard Alleva

NO 'LEAVE IT TO BEAVER'

'American Beauty'

Near the beginning of *American Beauty*, its hero, Lester Burnham, greets us on the soundtrack with the news that we are going to see him die. In fact, Burnham the narrator seems to be speaking from the other side of the grave as Burnham the character enacts his final days. This device may remind you of the opening of *Sunset Boulevard*, where William Holden's corpse invites us to watch what led up to his demise, or of *Reversal of Fortune*, in which the comatose Sunny von Bulow narrates the trials of her husband Claus. But in those movies the devices were mordant strokes designed to put you in the right cynical frame of mind to enjoy stories of corruption and manipulation. Lester Burnham speaks toward a different objective: I'm under a death sentence but what really matters is how I'm going to spend my remaining time, as a doomed loser or as a doomed man to whom life was a gift. The real suspense in watching *American Beauty* lies not in guessing how or by whom he is to be murdered but in seeing whether or not Lester, suburban specimen disaffected from family and career, will get his life back before he loses it. Will he wake from his spiritual coma before a bullet makes a hole in his head?

The odds are against it, as the opening scenes wittily demonstrate. The scriptwriter, Alan Ball, and the director, Sam Mendes, give us a comedy of self-contempt starring Lester the Worm who slithers along from his house, which wife Caroline (a frenzied self-motivator who makes Martha Stewart look like an easy-going slob) keeps as pristine as the real estate she tries to unload on her queasy clientele, to the office, where an efficiency expert tells him to write a memo justifying his job since downsizing is nigh, back to his house where he picks at supper while his wife's choice of elevator music serenades him from the stereo and his daughter's cold stare silently communicates the sentiment she'll express aloud to a pal, "I need a role model for a father. Not some geek...."

But, as Kevin Spacey plays him, Lester Burnham is a geek with a difference, a Walter Mitty infused with menace. There has always been something deliberately stiff, creepily robotic, about Spacey's speech and gait. His level, precisely articulating voice hints at sarcasms being carefully crafted in the recesses of his mind while his stride, as well as his slow burns, evoke Jack Benny at his daintiest, though this is a Jack Benny trying to turn himself into Hannibal Lechter. And damn near succeeding. In our hearts, we always root for the worm to turn, but in Spacey's case the results can't be pretty.

And they aren't. They are first banal, then beautiful, finally catastrophic.

The banal aspect of Lester's rebellion deserves a capital B. Lester becomes infatuated with one of his daughter's high school girlfriends, a preening cheerleader and would-be model whose screaming insecurities are smothered under a lascivious façade. The scenes in which the smitten man spies on the girl while she's a guest in his house possess the cringing, skin-crawling comedy of Humbert Humbert's stalking of Lolita, but also something of its lyricism. Lester dreams of worshiping Angela while she floats in an extravagance of roses and Spacey's slack-jawed look of besottedness couldn't be funnier or more poignant.

But Angela isn't the only new thing in Lester Burnham's life. His new neighbors are a paranoid ex-army colonel, his downtrodden wife, and their son, Ricky. The boy is both a pot-selling hipster who adroitly cons all authority figures (his battering, half-mad father certainly needs to be conned), and an almost Heideggerian mystic who caresses the mysterious splendor of everyday life with his video camera, preserving, among other images, the sight of a paper bag billowed and tumbled by the wind. For Ricky, it is a message from all-encompassing Being.

The boy becomes tutor to the man, but only in hipsterism, not mysticism. And so Lester learns to stymie the demands of wife, employers, and society at large with strategic nastiness, calculated frankness, deception, blackmail, and an almost lyric insolence. He takes bodybuilding tips from the neighborhood gay couple so that one day he can stand forth naked before Angela. Between the two of them, Ricky and Angela have introduced Lester to American beauty.

Does this vision convince? Does it make sense as an embrace of life just before death? as an efflorescence of vitality just before extinction?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In part it does. First-time director Mendes and his veteran cameraman, Conrad Hall (*In Cold Blood, Cool Hand Luke*) deliberately make the 'burbs look too bright and as sterile as a full-page spread in *Good Housekeeping*, and this gives Lester's yearning for romance and escape a certain visual rationale. At the same time, Hall's camera is alert to the unexpected, too-quickly-vanishing beauties of everyday life. For instance, there is a long shot of Lester and Ricky getting high in the cold, blue-lit ballroom of a hotel where Caroline is attending a realtors' convention. Suddenly the door in the back wall opens and a wedge of yellow light thrusts itself right into the dominant blueness. The intrusion of color into color is as exquisite as anything in Vermeer or Edward Hopper, other discoverers of the magic within the quotidian.

Alan Ball's script evinces a keen ear for both unconscious cruelties (mother to daughter about the latter's cheerleading performance: "You were wonderful! I watched your every move and you didn't screw up once.") and unconscious self-indictment (Angela: "If so many strange men want to make me, great! I'll be able to have a modeling career!"). In a world of such viperishness, no wonder Lester quests for The Great Good Place.

But does he indeed attain a higher consciousness, a more vivid reality? This brings up the oddest aspect of *American Beauty*. The best scenes by far in the movie are the ones in which the nominal hero, Lester, never appears: the courtship scenes of Ricky and Jane, beautifully enacted by Wes Bentley and Thora Birch. When these two fall in love, they really do attain a higher consciousness. Mendes and Ball drop their ironic stance when dealing with the lovers, and the very substance of Ricky's vision is the quintessence of anti-irony. While her friends are telling her that there's nothing worse in life than being ordinary, Jane is learning from Ricky the poetry of the everyday, the lyricism reposing within the banal, the startling weight of reality. And she teaches him that his vision needn't be solipsistic but can be communicated and shared.

Considering that Ricky and Lester like each other ("I think you've just become my personal hero," cracks Lester when he sees the boy tell off his boss), I kept wanting to see what would happen if Lester could tap into Ricky's way of looking at things rather than into the lad's supply of pot. Indeed, I wish Ball and Mendes had learned more from Ricky's mysticism before they trained their sights on suburbia, for they themselves don't see much beyond the bland appearances of suburban things. Instead they batter against them with the usual barrage of satirical missiles, their chief one being the image of the all-American frigid housewife-businesswoman who, of course, must commit adultery with a successful businessman because only success can turn her on. Annette Bening, one of our best actresses, has lots of emotional helium and she's wonderful pumping herself up behind the wheel of her car by singing "Don't Rain on My Parade," but Caroline, as written, is such a collection of neurotic tics, screams, and near-breakdowns that the actress ends up as a cartoon rather than a character.

This proves to be a serious flaw when Lester, forswearing his seduction of Angela, does unexpectedly achieve a moment of true transcendence as he gazes at family pictures of the happier past and discovers that his true joy comes from his memories of wife and child. This moment, the climax of the movie, half-worked for me because I could believe in Jane's reality but not in Caroline's.

Similarly caricatured is the paranoid military father who snarls rabidly homophobic remarks only to turn out to be himself a...well, I won't insult your intelligence by finishing that sentence. (Again, the script is at fault, not Chris Cooper's excellent performance.) Likewise, the colonel's wife is shown to be simply a zombie, for what else can a military man's wife become?

You can't make a masterpiece by cartooning some of your characters while insisting that the rest be taken as three-dimensional. Yet, hyped up by several booster shots of insolence, calmed down and textured by an interesting dose of mysticism, and given a rough feeling of coherence by smart dialogue, adroit direction, canny photography, and the greatest acting you'll catch on film all year, *American Beauty* is the best non-masterpiece I've seen in a long, long time. □

MEDIA

Celia Wren

HOME OF THE WALDORF SALAD

PBS's 'New York'

New York City is so insolently immediate, so whetted by the present, that it is nearly impossible, at least for nonhistorians, to imagine what it was like in ages long past. Times Square, with its tourist hordes and its attention-deficit neon—could the land beneath it ever have indulged in trees? That overcrowded deli selling five kinds of bottled water and Mongolian salad-bar fixings—could Thomas Jefferson ever have strolled through that space?

Well, he did—or at least some space like it—and pronounced the eighteenth-century city to be "a sewer filled with all the depravities of human nature." This excoriation is only one of the historical nuggets crammed into "New York," the seductive, hypereducational documentary that airs on PBS in five two-hour episodes November 14–18. Directed by Ric Burns (co-producer, with his brother Ken, of the acclaimed series "The Civil War"), and produced by Burns and Lisa Ades, the new program zeros in on the Big Apple in the quintessential Burns-brothers manner. Quotes from eyewitness accounts, interpreted by actors, and commentary by historians and celebrities (Donald Trump, Caleb Carr), speaking excitedly on camera, accent each

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

twist of the narrative; period illustrations, sepia photographs, and occasional modern postcard-picturesque vistas work with an expressive soundtrack to involve the viewer's mood, as well as his or her interest. The style lends a lush fervor to the coverage of New York's economic, social, cultural, and military past, including such topics as the city's first Jewish residents, the Civil War draft riots, P.T. Barnum's early exploits, the career of Walt Whitman, the creation of the early skyscrapers, and so on. November's five episodes track the city from 1609 through 1931; a final installment, to be broadcast in spring 2000, will extend the portrait through the present day.

New Yorkers are famous for thinking themselves at the center of the world, of course, but why would nonresidents want to devote more than ten hours to the history of the metropolis—even if it was the birthplace of the Waldorf salad? Seemingly desperate to combat doubts on this score, writers Burns and James Sanders have mustered innumerable quotes, from thinkers of the past and present, arguing that New York played a crucial role in constructing America's identity.

The city, the documentary asserts again and again, has been a kind of glass-and-concrete test tube in which capitalism, democracy, and diversity have percolated. Founded by settlers whose single goal—to make money—contrasted with the more spiritual motivations of pioneers in, say, Boston, New York has compensated for century-spanning greed with a commitment to multiculturalism, becoming "an experiment to see whether all the peoples of the world could live together in a single place."

Methinks the filmmakers do protest too much, one may be tempted to say, and certainly the program's recurrent hyperbole—New York is "the supreme laboratory of modern life," a "giant vortex, drawing everything in America into its orbit"—begins to feel like overkill.

Still, any who have followed the controversy over the Brooklyn Museum's "Sensation" exhibit may feel that they have, in fact, been watching abstractions batter at the walls of a test tube. Interlocked in the debate are all the value systems the "New York" documentary claims for its own—democracy, capitalist creativity, tolerance of difference. Here is a federal judge ruling on the powers of a mayor-who-would-be-king. There float accusations that the exhibit is a disguised financial gambit designed to boost prices for the artworks in question. All around stand groups of New Yorkers—devout protesters, disgusted members of the arts community—pondering whether their world views are incompatible. And yet, rarefied as the dispute has been, it has still been pinned to a specific urban space; on the exhibit's opening day, for example, the intricacies of the New York transit system distressed museum supporters, some of whom found it deeply suspicious that regular subways were not running back to Manhattan.

"There's a universe of totally disparate intentions, and somehow the city can accommodate, and embrace and accept, all that disparate intention," E.L. Doctorow intones at the beginning of the Burns documentary, as if he were defining the New York enigma—that cultural tempests like the "Sensation" sensation will not shatter the test tube's walls.

Urban life has always been mysterious: this is why nineteenth-century fiction about cities gave birth to the detective novel. Cities seem to menace individual identity; their vastness threatens to swallow up the single life, and their chaos to overwhelm personal meaning. The city dweller who finds he can, in fact, survive in a place like New York is presented with still another paradox: On a sidewalk surrounded by people, he can be completely alone. Coexistence does not mean unity, as the landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted observed when he said of New Yorkers: "Every day of their lives they have seen thousands of their fellow men, have met them face-to-face, have brushed against them, and yet have had no experience of anything in common with them." Olmsted's solution, in 1857, was to place a little bit of country in the middle of Manhattan: Central Park, designed (in Olmsted's view) to entice New York's disparate economic classes to join together in democratic recreation.

The strategy failed, at least at the time, as episode two of the Burnses' documentary makes clear: Olmsted's romantic scenery lured the upper classes, principally. Modern New Yorkers, for their part, know that the best source of *communitas* in Gotham is not parks, *per se*, but dog-walking. Dog owners have to stop and greet each other, because their dogs do it for them.

As for everyone else—the cat people, the people with anti-pet landlords, and so on—the other way to handle city loneliness is to luxuriate in it. Back in the 1860s, Charles Baudelaire wrote, of the urban loner: "For the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite....The spectator is a prince who everywhere rejoices in his *incognito*." It is the kind of response that, however historic the city, requires existing very much in the moment. □

"Experimenting with tradition since 1898..."

For information about the Franciscan Friars and Sisters of the Atonement, contact:

Vocation Director
Graymoor
PO Box 300
Garrison, NY 10524-0300
914 424 3671

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Revivals & new arrivals

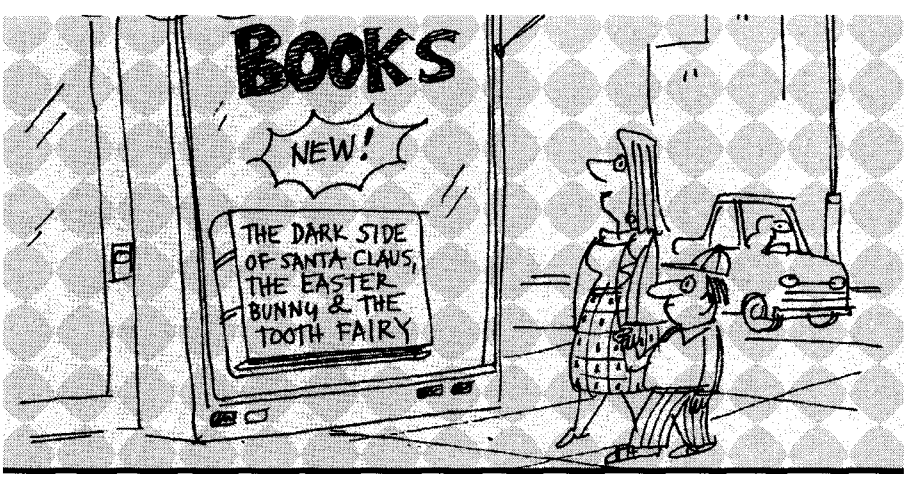
Daria Donnelly

To the litany of persons who shaped this century, let me add the name E[dith] Nesbit, whose stories precipitated a still evolving revolution in wonder. With her recently republished 1902 *Five Children and It* (Books of Wonder/Morrow, illus. Paul O. Zelinsky, $22, 242 pp., ages 8 and up), E. Nesbit ushered in a new era of children's fantasy literature. Before Nesbit, such literature fell into two types: either the entire action took place in an exotic or fantastical setting, or the child character (Dorothy or Alice) traveled from this world into a fantastical one. But in *Five Children and It*, a group of middle-class Edwardian children find a prehistoric, ill-tempered thing called a Psammead right in the gravel pit behind their house. And each day, corresponding to each chapter, he reluctantly grants them a wish that results in a new adventure in their very neighborhood.

Locating the fantastical in everyday life was Nesbit's great and enduring innovation. (E.T. actually looks like the Psammead!). Also new was the magic itself: comical, human, and wildly unpredictable rather than supernatural, dreadful, and weird. Even Nesbit's tone heralded change. She spoke directly and archly to her young readers, reminding them of novelistic conventions even as she overthrew them. And she was blessedly true to the boredom, embarrassment, pleasure, squabbling, vexation, and thrill of a childhood summer day. She once wrote: "When I was a child I used to pray fervently, tearfully, that when I should be grown up I might never forget what I thought, felt, and suffered then." Her prayers were efficacious.

Nesbit inspired the best magical storytellers of this century. C.S. Lewis was a great admirer. His ambition—to make theological truths palpable and beautiful for children—was not Nesbit's, but he borrowed her unpredictable magic, her images, and her sibling dynamics to his great benefit. In America, Nesbit's most ardent follower was Edward Eager, whose hilarious canon (1954–62)—*Half Magic, Knight's Castle, Magic by the Lake, The Time Garden, Magic or Not?, The Well-Wishers, Seven-Day Magic*—has just been reprinted (Odyssey/Harcourt Brace, $6, paper, ages 8 and up). A playwright and lyricist, Eager wrote books which are packed with word play and literary allusion, and are a pleasure to read aloud.

Eager is Nesbit after John Dewey, the automobile, Fred Astaire, and the cocktail hour. Yet the likeness outstrips the difference. Like Nesbit, Eager has children stumbling onto magic and then, in episodic chapters, learning how to control it and use it wisely. Like her, Eager's touch is light, his morals earned, his portraits true, his tone wry. He too places tiny shadows in the background—financial instability, class conflict, loneliness—things that, in both authors' works, register just the right amount on children as they dawdle through summer and tackle their proximate troubles. His children, like hers, are avid readers, and they shape and analyze their adventures with the help of what they have read. You can guess whose books Eager's children recur to most often.



The most Nesbit-like writer of the moment is British picture-book maker John Burningham. He is also, in my view, the most interesting religious thinker for young children since C. S. Lewis. That his books touch the eternal by means of the fantastical should not surprise us. Magic is the handmaiden of marvel, and marvel the mother of awe and praise. Or, as Jorge Luis Borges once said, "when we write about the fantastic, we are trying to get away from time and to write about everlasting things."

Burningham's latest book is *Whaddayamean* (Crown, $18.95), a parable about the urgent necessity of changing the way we live, think, and teach. The story is simple. Having taken millions of years to create this earthly paradise, God rests. Upon waking, God decides to visit the planet and see how things are going. Not wanting to be seen, God puts everyone in the world to sleep, and begins the tour. Startled to find two wakeful children, God invites them along on what proves to be the terrible discovery of our despoiled environment and hungry world. An enraged and sorrowful

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

God charges the children with telling grown-ups to "change the way they are living." When they object that no one will heed them, God says, "They will listen, if you tell them that I told you to."

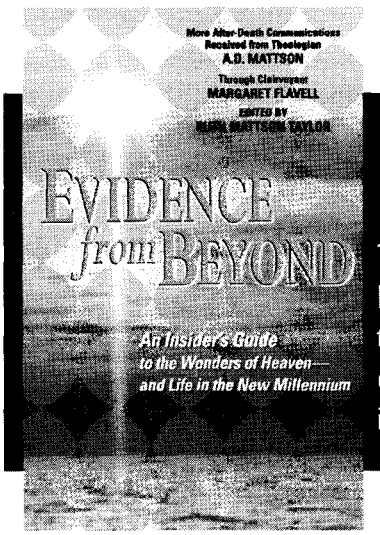
The children go forth, advocating change to financiers, clergymen, generals, and those who just stand by. These groups jeer ("Whaddayamean?"), until they are told that the message is from God. Hearing that, all change immediately. The world becomes lovely, and, on the closing page, the children are permitted by their mother to show God around again as long as they are not late for bed: "Remember you have school tomorrow."

Adults will resist the rapid change of heart, and blush at the wondrous pictures of financiers rhapsodically rowing down a river, clergymen line-dancing, and generals burying bombs. Unrealistic! It's much more complicated! And yet there is something in the baldness of God's command and the beauty of those pictures that shames our everyday evasions. We are too busy, too important, too powerless, too unsure, too ignorant; but we are not off the hook.

More to the heart of the matter is what young children resist in *Whaddayamean*. Used to volatility, they find the swift change unremarkable. What stops them is God's confession that he cannot recreate extinct creatures. All children think magically. It is up to us to cultivate the wonder in that thinking rather than the superstition. In earlier books, Burningham pits the fantastical against the literal and we laugh (see the uproarious *John Patrick Norman McHennessy-The Boy Who Was Always Late* for a particularly fine example). In *Whaddayamean*, he pits the fantastic (the gorgeous magic of evolution) against the merely escapist (our terrible inattention; our insufficient theology), and makes us gasp.

Burningham is just about the only picture-book creator who could make such a story startling rather than smarmy. This is partly owing to his art. He fearlessly varies media from page to page, using crayon, charcoal, india ink, gouache, pastel, photographs, and collage. His depicted world is under a marvelous and delicate *ad hoc* construction. And that variety of media knocks us off center, and makes us attentive to and grateful for variety. The tale is also fresh because of what I would call Burningham's "religious" imagination: his affirmation that all people have the capacity to change, his attention to the loveliness of this world, and his sure, almost casual, integration of science and faith.

That imagination also animates his extraordinary 1996 *Cloudland*, recently released in paper (Dragonfly, $7.99). Following the phenomenology of a near-death experience, Burningham tells the story of young Albert, who falls off a mountain and is caught with a magic spell by the children of Cloudland, with whom he frolics happily until his desire for mother and father moves the Queen to send him home. Burningham gives absolutely equal weight to the beauty of



A MESSAGE OF HOPE FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

The after-death communications of Lutheran theologian A.D. Mattson, this powerful book reveals the affinity of spirituality and quantum physics in a cosmos that is both holy and holistic.

"[Q]uite literally a Godsend! It is a fantastic contribution for the human race's evolution."
Juliet Hollister, Founder, The Temple of Understanding

"[T]his book addresses the rising tide of spiritual hunger at a point in the human odyssey marked by unprecedented promise and peril.... [I]t presents convincing evidence of the seamlessness of life in the hereafter. Thanks for serving me a fine meal for the mind."
The Right Reverend Bennett J. Sims
Bishop Emeritus, the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta

"Ruth Mattson Taylor's new work presents evidence of what the Beyond is like.... As he did in this life, A.D. communicates a compelling message in everyday terms."
The Reverend John A. Nasstrom, Ph.D.
Retired Lutheran pastor and church executive

"[C]ompelling believability!...This is a stimulating book with a great message for everyone."
Elda Hartley, Life Director, Institute of Noetic Sciences

"Mattson's messages confirm the universal teachings of the ancient spiritual traditions on life after death...and the nature of God as Love. This marvelous book both confirms and inspires."
Dr. John F. Miller III, President
Academy of Religion & Psychical Research

EVIDENCE FROM BEYOND
An Insider's Guide to the Wonders of Heaven—and Life in the New Millennium
After-Death Communications Received from Theologian A.D. Mattson
Through Clairvoyant Margaret Flavell, Edited by Ruth Mattson Taylor
ISBN 0-9636620-5-8 ♦ Hardcover ♦ $22.95
Published by Brett Books, Inc. ♦ Brooklyn, New York
Available at your favorite bookstore! Or call 1-800-431-1579

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

heaven and the beauty of life; Albert returns filled with the sweet desire both for home and for the spell that will return him to Cloudland.

What I especially love in all Burningham's books (those that touch on faith and many that do not) is that his young characters confront the fantastic with complete serenity. Be it with children in the clouds, a lion on the way to school, or God enroute to looking at the world, a Burningham child is open to all encounters. In this, Burningham outnesbits Nesbit, whose characters have residual sweats and anxieties about the magic they encounter.

Harrowing manifestations of the supernatural can be found in Rudolfo Anaya's *My Land Sings: Stories from the Rio Grande* (Morrow, $17, 174 pp., ages 10 and up). The celebrated Chicano writer (best known for his novel, *Bless Me, Ultima*) retells five folktales (*cuentos*) formed by the cultural confluences (Pueblo Indian, Spanish, and Mexican) of New Mexico's Rio Grande valley from the sixteenth century forward; to these he adds five modern *cuentos* of his own. Catholic elements are present in many of the stories: Mary succors peasants; Jesus is refused food by a woodcutter bitter about God's unfair treatment of the poor.

The majority are coming-of-age tales, and they emphasize the irrevocable results of young people's choices. While Anaya remains true to the folktales' conservative spirit, he is never misty-eyed about the life they aim to preserve. Anaya understands that, during the tumultuous time of an adolescent's awakened desire, the tellers wished to strongly reassert the values of emotional reticence, hospitality to strangers, and respect for parents. But Anaya also credits the young people's experience of village life as unjust and cruelly circumscribed.

Clearly, the stories of magic getting the most attention these days are British writer J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter books. The latest, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (Scholastic, $19.95, 439 pp., ages 8 and up), finds the young wizard continuing his studies at Hogwarts, and fending off another terrifying assault from the allies of Lord Voldemort. Like the first two volumes in the planned series of seven, *Azkaban* is a pleasure: superbly constructed, amazingly inventive, deliciously hyperbolic, psychologically insightful, successful in both humor and terror. It also confirms that Rowling has a particular gift for the serial. With this new installment, she has us rethinking past events and guessing at coming twists.

While I had fun reading the Harry Potter books, I confess they unexpectedly depressed me. Despite their fantastical, technology-free trappings, the settings and plots perfectly mirror the new, rather unmagical, conditions of childhood. Acquisition (of stuff, spells, grades, housepoints) plays as big a role as it does in life. Gone are the endless hours of unsupervised play found in Nesbit, Lewis, Burningham, and Eager, that leisure in which we oldsters imagined, invented, and stumbled on the marvelous. For Harry Potter, magic is not an accidental discovery or willed act of the imagination, but a structured program of study. When not assigned, books are read merely to solve problems.

Maybe I should credit Maurice Sendak for putting me in this mood. His latest storybook, *Swine Lake* (Harper Collins, $15.95, ages 4 and up), finds him as gloomy about the state of contemporary culture as he was in his extraordinary 1993 *We Are All in the Dumps with Jack and Guy*. In that earlier work, Sendak teamed up with Mother Goose to rail against contemporary homelessness and greed as crimes against the gorgeous souls of children. In *Swine Lake*, Sendak's illustrations (of a previously unpublished story by the late James Marshall) show the vulgarity of contemporary culture: our shuttered bookshops, landscape-blighting McMansions, bloated film and stage productions. It is against this backdrop that a mangy and lusciously romantic wolf keeps faith with beauty.

There have been many recent picture book "collaborations" between the living and dead (the resurgent interest in children's literature seems to have sent publishers to their dusty files). This one is the very best. Sendak adored James Marshall, and understood Marshall's immense gifts as quite different from his own. While his desire to pay homage is deep (the eyes are pure Marshall), it is never slavish. Knowing that he is Melville to Marshall's Molière, our history-haunted chronicler of the inner life adds a new and unexpected dimension to Marshall's exuberant regard for human folly. This book reminds us that love is the most potent magic of all.

Other previously unpublished works that have found companionate illustrators are the late Margaret Wise Brown's *Another Important Book* (HarperCollins, illustrated by Chris Raschka, $15.95, ages 2-8) and the late Joseph Brodsky's *Discovery* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, illustrated by Vladimir Radunsky, $16, ages 4 and up). Raschka is in top form, geometricizing both childhood development and Brown's quirky rhythms. Brodsky's poem, about the "discovery" of America, cannily expands Robert Frost's "The Gift Outright" in every direction. His rhyme is, as ever, masterly (seagull / legal; silent / assignment), and his point of view absolutely fresh.

It is never the wrong season to revive Mother Goose. The Mother's legendary editor, Iona Opie, and illustrator Rosemary Wells team up again for a new selection of the rhymes. *Here Comes Mother Goose* (Candlewick, $21.99, 107 pp., ages 2 and up) is a great follow-up to their *My Very First Mother Goose*. Opie has taken a few comic liberties in her versions: perhaps boys are made of sugar and spice and all things nice. Wells, the master of deadpan illustration, introduces not only new animal characters, but some lovely fruit-headed royalty.

Although my focus has been on the magical, there are three works of gentle realism I commend to your attention. In a departure from his picture book work, Tomie de Paola, past recipient of the Catholic Library Association Regina Award, has just completed the first of a promised series of autobiographical storybooks. *26 Fairmount Avenue* (Putnam, $13.99, 57 pp., ages 4 and up) finds five-year-old Tomie anxious-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ly awaiting the completion of his home. Dick King-Smith (of *Babe* fame) has written a series of six books, beginning with *Sophie's Snail* (Candlewick, $4.99 paper, 95 pp., ages 4 to 9), which follows the exploits of a brusque young animal lover as she grows from age four to age eight.

Despite obvious differences in genre and locale, both series are dominated by a determined (and not-always-appealing) child, who is possessed with a strong sense of vocation that is lovingly nurtured by understanding older relatives. Little Tomie's exacting judgment of Walt Disney's *Snow White* is an especially fine vignette; and Sophie's great-great-Aunt Al is a character to watch out for. I am just sorry that both writers are so clumsy in their representation of childhood tears. Are there really children who have never felt the anxiety of separating from their parents; and who necessarily "disapprove" it in others? That judgmental stoicism might be what they call in the biz a "cover feeling." In any case parents who are trying to help their children (especially boys) feel comfortable about expressing feelings, will have to pass over a sentence or two in silence.

Then we may be so lucky as to nurture a child as emotionally capable as Ben Hunter, protagonist of Kevin Henkes's new novel, *The Birthday Room* (Morrow Junior, $15, 152 pp., ages 10 and up). This is a lovely and well-constructed story about an artistically talented boy who receives two things for his twelfth birthday: a room in which he can draw, and a letter from his mother's estranged brother. He surprises his mother by regarding the latter with far more excitement. Ben's burning desire to know the man responsible for the childhood accident that resulted in the loss of his finger precipitates painful conversation, lots of reconciliation, and even a little romance. It is heartening to see a family working so hard to make family work. Henkes once said that home was the oasis of his childhood; as he knows that this is not true for all children, his vocation is to share "this sense of hope." □

Daria Donnelly's *column on children's books appears twice a year. She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

"Character is destiny."
—Heraclitus

"Intelligence plus *character* — that is the goal of a true education."
—Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

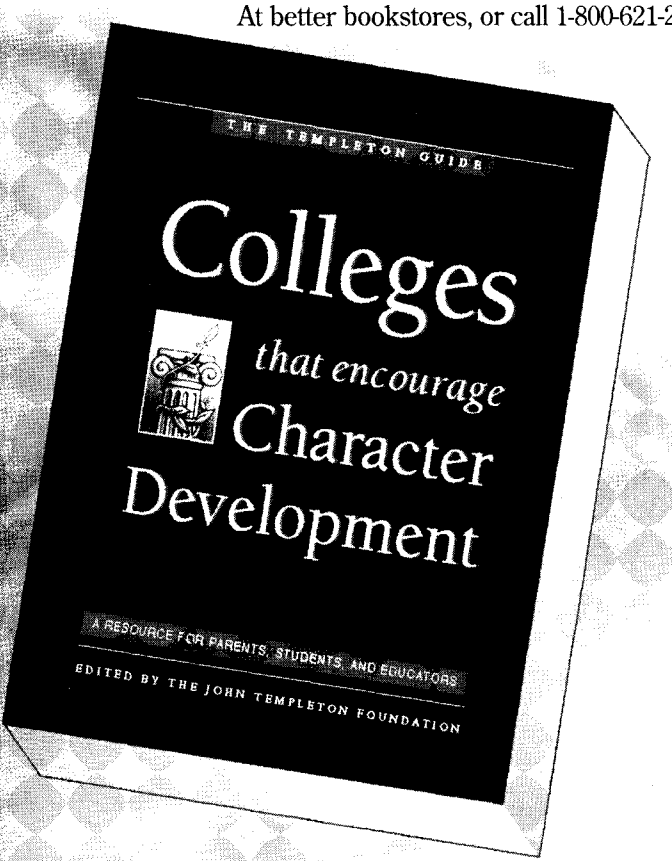
Recent national studies suggest that the vast majority of Americans share a respect for a common set of core values: honesty, compassion, and personal responsibility. While those positive traits are formed over a lifetime, the college experience is critical to the formation of a moral compass. But which colleges are best for character development? The answers can be found in this landmark book.

Developed by a group of distinguished educational professionals, *Colleges That Encourage Character Development* includes:

- Profiles of more than 400 exemplary college programs in ten categories
- Profiles of 50 college presidents who emphasize character development
- Profiles of 100 colleges that encourage personal and civic responsibility

Colleges That Encourage Character Development is at once an invaluable reference for parents and students seeking outstanding colleges and a resource for colleges that want to develop higher standards and better practices for their students.

424 pages • $16.95, paperback
At better bookstores, or call 1-800-621-2736



TEMPLETON FOUNDATION PRESS
www.templeton.org/press www.collegeandcharacter.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ATTENTION DEFICIT

Katharine Byrne

In the annals of family photography, snapshot division, children were likely to be lined up, all of them urged to stand still and smile at their father's camera. As each became old enough to find his or her spot in the lineup, there were few one-child-at-a-time pictures.

Yet here is an uncommon shot: a middle child in what would today be thought of as a large family, taken when she was about five years old, at a rented cottage beside a lake. She is alone with her mother and father, and they are sitting down. Who could have taken this picture? Why is this her favorite snapshot? Why has she rescued it from a desk drawer, smoothed its curled corners, and honored it with a little frame?

Recorded in this photo is a rare moment of time-out, leisure, respite, in hectic lives: *both* parents sitting down together, looking at and apparently *listening* to one child. Neither of them distracted, neither required to divide this precious moment with others or with some task they were doing at the same time.

From a mental photo gallery this same Peggy can call up a scene in a kitchen at countdown time in her family, an hour before 6 P.M. The mother is there acting out a familiar, frantic household scene: striding from sink to refrigerator to stove, purposefully putting together one more evening meal, aiming at a 6 P.M. deadline, at which time the father will appear and all the children will be gathered from sandbox, yard swing, alley, or empty lot at the end of the block, and directed to wash their hands. The resident beagle is also present, watching with interest as leftovers from a Sunday roast beef are trimmed and tailored for a reappearance in tonight's dinner. He is anxiously underfoot, hoping that a piece of meat will fall to the floor and knowing that, at least, the empty refrigerator dish will soon be available for licking.

And here is the child who earlier appeared at the side of the lake with both parents. A serious little girl, intent on telling a story and having it listened to. The tale may be rambling, the plot confused and hard to follow, but not to her. She is trying to report an episode of significance, worthy of attention and response. As she tells her story, however, she is aware of an inattentive audience, with other things on its mind. She tugs at her mother's skirt. (This was a long time ago; the mother may even be wearing an apron.) Peggy is not satisfied with "Really?" or the noncommittal "Uh-huh," as her mother searches the refrigerator for a green pepper.

"Put your eye on Peggy," she urges, wisely making the connection between listening and looking. This child knows that in the raucous dinner scene ahead her voice will never be heard above those of older children or the cries of littler members perched on telephone books or harnessed into high chairs. This is her chance, and she is determined to seize it.

"Pay attention" is the message she is trying to convey to the distracted cook. There's an unspoken, not-quite-conscious subtext: "It doesn't matter to me that you need to keep moving toward an immediate goal that involves all those other people. I have my own needs, and I am no more concerned with theirs than this beagle is. I am trying to report to you a serious infringement on my rights, a power struggle with a child who won't share the sifter in the sandbox, and you aren't really listening."

Now, a generation later, the family living in that house is smaller, the kitchen furnishings have been updated, the mother has just exchanged her office tweeds for jeans and a sweatshirt, but her immediate concerns and those of a child who is following her around are similarly in conflict. For many hours each day, a job based elsewhere eats into the mother's time and energy. The current kitchen scene may consist mostly of ladled foods produced elsewhere and carried home.

But time is still crucial, and here is another Peggy, her desire for undivided attention strong, her report of the day's trials or triumphs crying to be told; she wants a mother able and willing to listen and sympathize. There is this mean boy, this crabby teacher, this bus driver who hollers at the passengers....

And this mother too has her mind elsewhere: a client's last-minute complaint still hanging over her head and unsolved; a boss who clearly wonders why she must leave at precisely 5 o'clock. And—along with dinner—there is the prospect of the Other Child's game that starts one hour from now.

The circumstances are different, but also the same. Every child craves attention. Needs to be looked at and listened to. How to manage this is every mother's problem, and at this hour of the evening the chances for solving it don't look good. In today's world of smaller families, one might hope that there would be more time to divide among fewer children, but it does not follow. For women who work away from home, who struggle through traffic to return to the base they may have left ten hours earlier, it doesn't matter whether there is one child or five.

Yes, attention must be paid. But right now the dinner must be dug out of cartons picked up at a Thai restaurant on the way home; a salad must be assembled; and all the tablespoons are still in the dishwasher.

Does this writer have a formula for balancing the corporate needs of the family against one child's legitimate demands? Well, no. But every child who has been put off with an inappropriate "Really?" or a distracted "Uh-huh" knows that this is not enough. Fewer children and more time-saving technology have not mitigated the problem of harried distractibility. Every child's desire for a responsive ear has not diminished. So, put your eye on Peggy. Give her the assurance you'd grant any other important client. Tell her, "I'm sorry," and, "I'll get back to you as soon as I can." □

Katharine Byrne, *a frequent contributor to* Commonweal *and other publications, lives in Chicago. Having survived her childhood, "Peggy" is now a criminal defense lawyer.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pacelli's prosecutor

Hitler's Pope
The Secret History of Pius XII
John Cornwell
Viking, $29.95, 430 pp.

John F. Morley

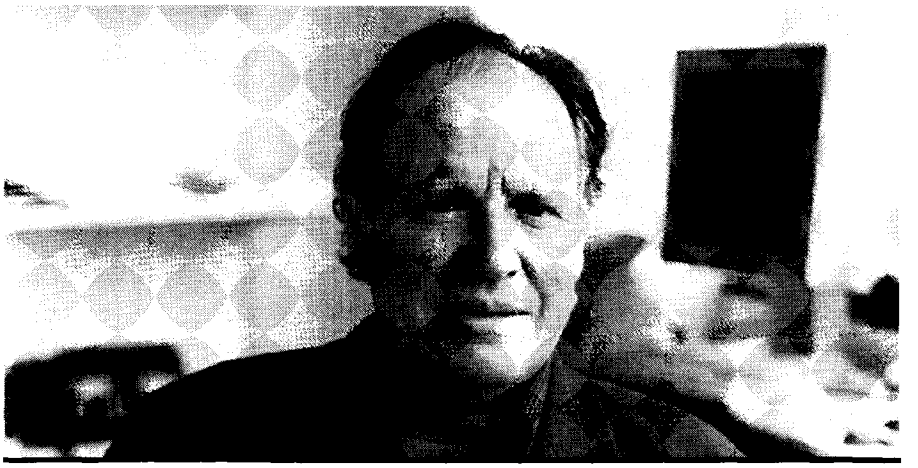
One approaches with skepticism and apprehension a work whose author describes his "moral shock" at the very subject about whom he is writing. Such feelings are exacerbated by a tendentious title which, on one hand, characterizes Pope Pius XII as some kind of subservient ally or stooge of Adolf Hitler, and, on the other, with its reference to "secret history," reduces itself to the level of a supermarket tabloid. There is no author or historian who can write totally objectively, and such an antiseptic approach would not be desirable in any case. It is rare, however, that any author reveals the level of his bias even before the reader takes up the book, but this is what John Cornwell does in *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII*.

Nevertheless, this is a fascinating book which enlightens while it enrages, accuses while it challenges, offends while it searches for truth. Cornwell's research includes sources as diverse as the beatification testimony for Pope Pius XII, Vatican archives up to the year 1922 dealing with Pacelli's early career in Germany, and a variety of governmental and scholarly studies concerning the 1933 concordat between the Holy See and Nazi Germany. It is perhaps Cornwell's most damning allegation that Pacelli, then the Vatican's secretary of state, was instrumental in making a deal whereby the Catholic Center Party, then the only political obstacle to Hitler's one-party rule, would disband in exchange for concessions made to the Holy See in the concordat.

Peter Gumpel, S.J., the postulator for the beatification of Pius XII, has already severely criticized Cornwell not only for the thesis of his book, but also for overlooking many pertinent sources. This may well be true, but Gumpel's task, and I say this with admiration for his dedication and years of research, is to do all in his power to promote the cause of someone whom he calls a "saint." If one is biased, so also is the other.

Cornwell's portrait of the young Pacelli's impressive but rather conventional piety lies at the heart of the book. Inner-directed with an emphasis on withdrawal from society. Pacelli's spiritual life was individualistic and subjective. Cornwell makes much of the anachronistic quality of this approach to spiritual formation. But those of us trained in seminaries before Vatican Council II will readily recognize it. That this spirituality became part of Pacelli's entire attitude toward life is indisputable, but why should it have been otherwise? Cornwell gives the mistaken impression that this severe priestly spirituality was somehow unique to Pacelli and thereby had grave consequences for his governance of the church. But it was hardly unique. Many of us were taught in similar fashion. For example, Cornwell does not seem to understand the awe in which most Catholics held their local bishops, to say nothing of the adulation directed toward cardinals and the pope himself. This high clericalism may appear foreign or negative to us now, but such retroactive judgments, evaluating the past with the benefit of hindsight, are not historically or intellectually tenable. The major fault, perhaps, of Cornwell's book is precisely this inability or unwillingness to understand the *sitz-im-leben*, the real-life situation in which Pacelli was raised, taught, and pursued his ecclesiastical career.

In a similar fashion, the author imputes malevolence to Pacelli's attempts to bring the prerogatives and relationships of the individual German states, and later the Reich itself, into conformity with the 1917 Code of Canon Law. True, the concordat, as others before it, contributed immensely to the centralization of power in the Vatican. But Pacelli and Pope Pius XI viewed con-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cordats as essential to the security of the church of that day, particularly in light of the ever-present threat from communism. They may have been shortsighted, they may have been wrong, but they were sincerely dedicated to the church, and sinister motives should not be attributed to either of them.

On the specific question of Germany's Catholic Center Party, it is important to remember that all Catholic political parties were anathema to Pius XI because they could too easily operate outside the influence of ecclesiastical authorities. Pius XI and Pacelli considered it a fair exchange to effectively dissolve the Center Party for the presumed advantages the concordat would bring the church. In the light of history, all of this may have been a mistake. Any short-term advantages for the church were soon overwhelmed by Hitler's totalitarian rule. Indeed, the church in Germany was probably weakened by the concordat. It seems to me, however, that the greater problem with the concordat was that Pius XII never attempted to repudiate it even during the worst years of Nazism. Diplomatic relations between the Vatican and Nazi Germany continued throughout the war. There were, indeed, some benefits in this relationship, particularly for the Jews of Rome at the time of the German occupation and Jewish deportation. Nevertheless, the fact of such a continuing link between the church and the Nazis remains a source of scandal.

Cornwell's description and interpretation of Pacelli's alleged anti-Semitism is also problematic and simplistic. He assumes from two letters that he quotes in detail that Pacelli had a decades-long "secret antipathy toward the Jews," that Pius believed there was an intrinsic link between Jews and Bolshevism, and that assisting the Jews would enable them to move more actively against the church. Most damning, Cornwell contends that the pope was a hypocrite in attempting to claim "retrospective moral superiority" in defending the Jews. These are weighty and sobering charges that cannot be dismissed out of hand. However, I do not believe that the documentation Cornwell presents proves his case, especially because throughout the book Cornwell insists on interpreting every decision and action of Pacelli in a way most inimical to him.

The author is so committed to demonstrating or proving everything prejudicial to Pacelli, that he weakens, almost to the point of destruction, his own basic argument. He casts Pacelli as some sort of villain with the power to manipulate events and people around him, even his superiors, and as a man of the church so single-minded that only ecclesiastical power and prerogatives mattered to him. He judges the concordat between the Vatican and Nazi Germany not only deleterious for the German church but also the principal reason that the pope was outwitted by the Nazis and became "Hitler's Pope." Predictably and anachronistically, Cornwell also holds Pacelli responsible for everything that went wrong after the concordat was signed. He furthermore depicts a man who reflected the anti-Jewish attitudes of the church of that time and therefore by definition was an anti-Semite. All of this allows Cornwell to present an unproven generalization as a conclusion: The pope's "silence had more to do with a habitual fear and distrust of the Jews than a strategy of diplomacy or a commitment to impartiality."

However, despite its serious flaws, *Hitler's Pope* is a book that cannot, and should not, be ignored. Every point that Cornwell raises—whether it is Pacelli's early career, his concordat negotiations, his spirituality and approach to the world, his refusal ever to explicitly criticize Nazi Germany, and his reaction to the Holocaust—is a matter of crucial concern to Catholics. For Catholics to gloss over Pius's actions as if there were no problems, no evidence of short-sightedness, no sacrificing of one principle for another, no infatuation with the notion of the church triumphant, denies the moral purpose of historical study. Pius XII cannot be seen to be above criticism.

Cornwell's final words are judgmental, but also challenging and inviting. His frankness may antagonize some, but I detect in this book an honesty and an angst that should not be overlooked: "I am convinced that the cumulative verdict of history shows him to be not a saintly exemplar for future generations, but a deeply flawed human being from whom Catholics, and our relations with other religions, can best profit by expressing our sincere regret." □

The Reverend John F. Morley *is the author of* Vatican Diplomacy and the Jews During the Holocaust, 1939–43. *He teaches in the department of religious studies at Seton Hall University.*

STUBBORN ATTACHMENTS

Urban Exodus
Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed
Gerald Gamm
Harvard University Press, $39.95, 396 pp.

Tom Deignan

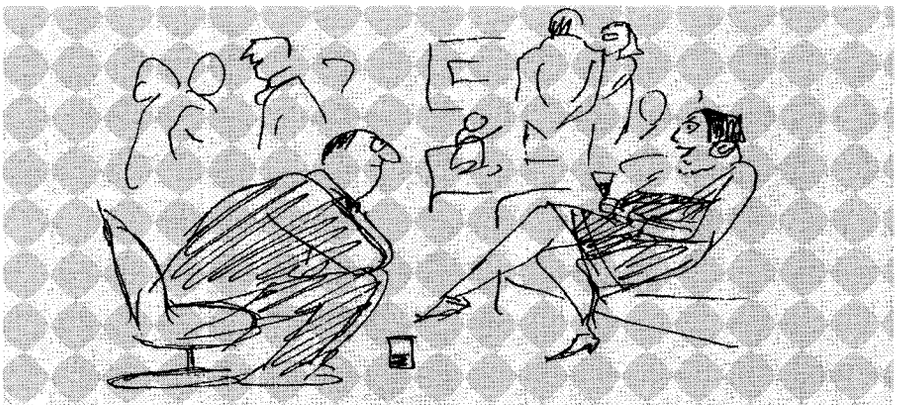
Next September, twenty-five years after putting a face—usually an angry Irish face—on post-1960s backlash, Boston's busing era will officially draw to a close, interring once and for all the rancor and tribalism that marked this particularly American crucible. (Eerily, Judge W. Arthur Garrity, whose rulings brought forced integration to Boston, died just months after the vote to end busing.) Already a learned crowd of reporters, novelists, and scholars have deconstructed socioeconomic conflict in Boston—none better than the late J. Anthony Lukas, in *Common Ground* in 1985—to the point that the topic might seem as exhausted as battle-weary Bostonians themselves. But in *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed*, Gerald Gamm says there are still holes in the story, most

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

significantly in the divergent connections Catholics and Jews maintained with their religious institutions. Synagogues and parishes, Gamm contends, essentially dictated who stayed in Boston's neighborhoods, who left for the suburbs, when, and why.

It's an intriguing argument, one almost provocative in its simplicity—though not without a few holes of its own. Cultural differences, it's often been said, explain why city-dwelling Catholics tend to fight turf wars, while Jews lean toward flight. Gamm agrees, but sees different causes. Distinguishing himself from Jonathan Rieder, John T. McGreevy and other urban chroniclers, Gamm notes, "Jewish institutions could survive by moving out of a declining neighborhood...but Catholic institutions have been permanently tied to their original location." Catholics, Gamm adds, have "a different attachment to territory," not "a different capacity for racist behavior." Gamm also stresses that the much-discussed ethno-racial battles of the 1960s have their roots in the 1920s. Then "Jewish neighborhoods began their long unraveling, and...Catholic neighborhoods began their resistance," hence the reason migrating blacks moved almost exclusively onto formerly Jewish blocks following World War II. Maps of Boston's Roxbury and Dorchester districts vividly illustrate these demographic shifts, which, by the 1990s, reinvigorated parishes such as central Dorchester's Saint Peter's. Offered as a symbol of Catholic vitality and endurance, Saint Peter's celebrates Mass in three languages, and more than 80 percent of its grade school students are black or Hispanic. But, just as Saint Peter's is a neat snapshot of Gamm's thesis, it also presents wrinkles which *Urban Exodus* never quite irons out.

The book's subtitle contends that Boston Catholics stayed. But which Catholics? The church and clergy may have stayed, but most of the Irish who dominated Saint Peter's just two decades ago are gone. More broadly, *Urban Exodus* is a study not of "Boston," but of Roxbury and Dorchester. Pivotal surrounding areas, such as South Boston and Charlestown, are not discussed. And,



"Do you really like where they put New Orleans?"

while Gamm's intense localism is his book's strength—particularly the touching letters from parishioners he quotes—this also precludes consideration of the wider world. There is scant mention of the Great Depression, the World Wars, or even city politics. Gamm provides illuminating quotes on Catholic anti-Semitism from native Bostonians Theodore H. White and Nat Hentoff, yet fails to mention the rise and fall of Father Charles Coughlin. Religious tension in Boston was so high on the eve of World War II that (as Gamm notes) Wallace Stegner criticized the city's Catholic leadership in the *Atlantic Monthly*. (In New York at this time, frightening, if bizarre, coalitions developed between Catholic-dominated Christian Front groups, the German-American Bund, and even the anti-Catholic Klan.) Frustratingly, Gamm doesn't consider whether these developments also spurred middle-class Jewish flight.

At times it feels as if *Urban Exodus* could have been bulked up to incorporate a broader analysis, or slimmed down into an excellent journal article or two. McGreevy's *Parish Boundaries* still seems to provide fuller insights into religious (and racial and class) tensions, not just for the whole of urban America but also for Boston. As McGreevy has noted, the civil rights battle between liberal clergy and conservative parishioners (and clergy) was particularly intense in Boston, a development Gamm only touches on. He takes a brief look at the Association of Boston Urban Priests, and describes meetings "at which priests attempted to teach racial tolerance and urged whites to stay." Surely some listened, but others as easily decided they were more white than Catholic, and had no qualms severing ties to priests who (as they saw it) preached racial politics from the pulpit. This, at least in part, may explain the post-1960s drain of whites from central Dorchester parishes. Yet, even in recent decades, as Gamm intriguingly notes, blocks nearest churches have remained white and Catholic as the rest of the parish changed. But the Catholics who fled seem at least as revealing a story as those who stayed. Perhaps what could ultimately be said is that some Boston Catholics stayed longer, particularly in areas like east Dorchester, which remains not only white, but also (perhaps coincidentally, perhaps not) most remote from black neighborhoods.

Gamm, an associate professor of political science and history at the University of Rochester, does consider broader factors—the automobile, for one—in his valuable look back at suburbanization in the 1920s. Three decades later, Gamm writes, there were "no significant socioeconomic differences between Dorchester's Jewish and Catholic districts"—undermining the oft-cited theory that Jews migrated simply because they were more affluent or educated. Gamm also forthrightly confronts the violent crime, redlining, and blockbusting that affected residential behavior in the late 1960s and 1970s. Particularly valuable in *Urban Exodus*, however, is Gamm's treatment of the controversial Boston Banks Urban Renewal Group (BBURG), which provided mortgage funds to low-income

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

black families and was widely considered a pernicious scheme by real estate speculators who were targeting Jewish areas and exacerbating racial tension. Gamm coolly debunks the case against BBURG—especially important since, as he writes, "many scholars have inferred that similar banking programs contributed to the Jewish exodus from other cities."

Urban Exodus takes its place in an increasingly impressive collection of books on urban conflict from L.A. to Yonkers, which seriously consider the intricacies of geography (not to mention religion). To paraphrase that eminent Bostonian, Tip O'Neill, we're finally learning that a good deal of American history is local. □

Tom Deignan *has taught American history, film, and English at CUNY and Saint John's University. He is also working on a novel called* Staten Islanders.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 4)

Class warfare?

Re: the recent discussion in your pages of Social Security funding, it seems useful to me to pay attention to the numbers games played by some parties to the debate. I would instance television presentations by Senator Richard Santorum (R-Pa.), saying that the Social Security tax is 12.4 percent. It is. And it isn't. The employee tax rate is 7.65 percent, of which 1.45 percent is intended for Medicare, so that the employee contributes 6.2 percent to Social Security. This is matched by the employer's contribution of 6.2 percent. Senator Santorum leaves the impression that the resulting 12.4 percent tax falls only on the employee.

Like others siding with him in this debate, the senator glosses over the fact that the 7.65 percent tax rate applies up to a cap of $72,600 (except for the Medicare portion, which has no cap). Beyond that, the employee pays no further Social Security tax. Thus, anyone earning twice the cap pays only half the tax rate; a millionaire would pay about half of 1 percent. Obviously, then, an increase in income brings with it a decrease in tax rate, a classic example of regressive taxation.

According to a congressional source, removing the cap would add close to $60 billion annually to the Social Security trust fund. This amount times twenty years (when the baby boomer crunch arrives) translates into an additional $1.2 trillion for baby boomers to share.

To propose removal of the cap is to invite a certain breed of legislator to raise the smokescreen of "class warfare." In reality, those earning above the cap have been waging a silent war on those below it ever since the first cap was set. If the pursuit of fairness and tax justice constitutes class warfare, so be it. Removing the cap is only the first and fairest among the steps needed to "fix" the Social Security trust fund.

HELMUT GOLATZ
State College, Pa.

On evolution, check Peirce

Thank you for your editorial, "Expelling Darwin" [September 10]. It's true that evolution is still a challenge that has not been met. I want to impart one ray of hope for a far better understanding. It's contained in the philosophy of C.S. Peirce, well presented in Karl Otto Apel's book, *From Pragmatism to Pragmaticism* (Humanities Press, 1995).

Peirce criticizes Darwin's theory through criticism of its tradition, empiricist nominalism. In layman's terms, that tradition finds facts to be brute and final, and assumes that chance and randomness totally control their occurrence. What it does not admit, for Peirce, is that generality (law, habit, rational mediation, interpreting of signs) is as fundamental and immediate as fact. (The old quarrel over universals here.) But with the "addition" of generality, Darwin's theory is shown to overemphasize facts and blind chance as well as materialism, and to miss entirely the role of generality (as natural law and human habit) in the evolution of the universe. For Peirce, Darwin's theory is a three-legged stool with two huge legs—not a sturdy piece of furniture.

PATRICK LIPPERT
Coeur D'Alene, Idaho

CLASSIFIED

RATES: $1.10 per word; 12-word minimum. Discounts 5 percent, 3 times; 10 percent, 6 times; 15 percent, 12 times. Advance payment required. Discounts and monthly billing available for repeat advertisers. For additional information call 212-662-4200 or write COMMONWEAL, 475 Riverside Dr., Rm. 405, New York, NY 10115.

Manuscripts Wanted

MANUSCRIPTS WANTED. ALL TYPES. Subsidy Publisher with 75-year tradition. 1-800-695-9599.

New Video

WOMEN IN THE WINDS OF CHANGE Conversations with 26 prominent women about equality and justice. For more information, contact Bridget Mary Meehan at 703-379-2487 or e-mail sofiabmm@aol.com

Support Needed

BENEFACTORS SOUGHT, DONATIONS begged for struggling Mississippi Delta mission. Three religious Sisters serve small rural parish, Hispanic farm workers, prisoners, interracial, interfaith partnerships, and tutor potential high school dropouts. Write: DELTA CATHOLIC MINISTRIES, Box 307, Rosedale, MS 38769.

Millennial Tour

SCOTLAND, IRELAND, ENGLAND AND WALES July 2000 Millennium Memories. November Special ($300 Discount). Size limited. Details: Rev. Fred Griffie, (606) 573-9771; Fax (606) 573-2311.

Faculty Position

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY. Doctorate in Theology with a general background in Catholic Theology and Philosophy. Area of expertise open. Teaching responsibilities include an introductory course on the Bible as well as intermediate, upper-level, and graduate courses in Theology. Evidence of excellence in scholarship and teaching required. Rank: Open. Tenure track. Salary competitive. Please send letter of application, *curriculum vitae*, three letters of recommendation, and graduate school transcripts to: Andre E. Dargis, A.A., Dept. of Theology, Assumption College, 500 Salisbury Street, P.O. Box 15005, Worcester, MA 01615-0005. Deadline for application: December 15, 1999. E.O.E.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WILLIAMSBURG: THE PAST UNCHAINED

Peter Feuerherd

Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, attracts more than a million tourists a year. Many come to hear history dramatically retold through the recreated speeches of Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson and to view historical pageants pitting stuffy redcoats against brave patriots. Williamsburg has developed a reputation—perhaps undeserved—for a kind of Disneyfied history, a place where the good guys and bad guys are easy to identify, providing weary travelers with a respite from today's more ambiguous headlines.

But the dilemmas of the late twentieth century are curiously infringing on the patriotic fervor at Williamsburg. With its brave new program titled "Enslaving Virginia," the colonial town is taking a vigorous, dramatic look at the impact of slavery on eighteenth-century life and, by implication, today's America.

The program is recognition—a belated one—that roughly half of Williamsburg's two thousand inhabitants in the colonial era were slaves and free black people.

The *Washington Post* (July 7, 1999) reported that one historical reenactment featured the local militia breaking up an illegal gathering of slaves. The slaves were discussing an offer of freedom from a British governor who, attempting to dampen revolutionary fervor among white slave owners, threatened to liberate the slaves of those disloyal to the Crown. The re-creation soon became more than that. Visitors physically attempted to disarm the militia members, who were forced to step out of character to hold on to their muskets.

When my wife and I visited Williamsburg last summer, we saw no such physical confrontations. But the edginess introduced by the "Enslaving Virginia" program was evident. An actor depicting Patrick Henry was challenged by a member of the audience about whether the orator was a hypocrite for owning slaves. Henry answered with the studied ambivalence that many colonial leaders shared.

A Williamsburg staff member led a walking tour of slavery in the town. It included a graphic account of the Middle Passage taken by slaves from Africa to the West Indies, thence on to America. At nearby Carter's Grove plantation, operated by the Williamsburg Foundation, our tour of the slave quarters included a discussion of daily life.

"What's your name?" asked a guide at Carter's Grove, playing the role of an "overseer" instructing a tourist pressed into service as a "slave."

"Bill," said the tourist.

"That's okay, Sam," responded the overseer, dramatizing how the masters of Carter's Grove arbitrarily assigned slave names in an elaborate process of degradation.

Not everyone takes "Enslaving Virginia" easily. One discussion of slavery we witnessed included many families, most of them white. The children were engrossed in the lecture. But a number of parents quickly wearied of the presentation and moved along to other exhibits. It was hard to tell whether the lack of interest was because of the afternoon heat or wariness about the subject. But another incident was clearer: at Carter's Grove, a staff member directed us toward the mansion, discouraging us from spending time at the slave quarters.

Talking with staff members, we discovered that they regularly discussed issues raised by "Enslaving Virginia." Some said they were pleased that the number of African-Americans visiting Williamsburg had increased greatly over the past year, indicating support for the new program. Others talked freely about thornier issues. For example, how should recent DNA evidence indicating that Thomas Jefferson probably fathered slave children be depicted? Some urged full disclosure; others were more conflicted. A lecture we heard about Jefferson went into depth about his love life, except for what may have gone on between him and Sally Hemmings, Jefferson's slave and half-sister of his deceased wife.

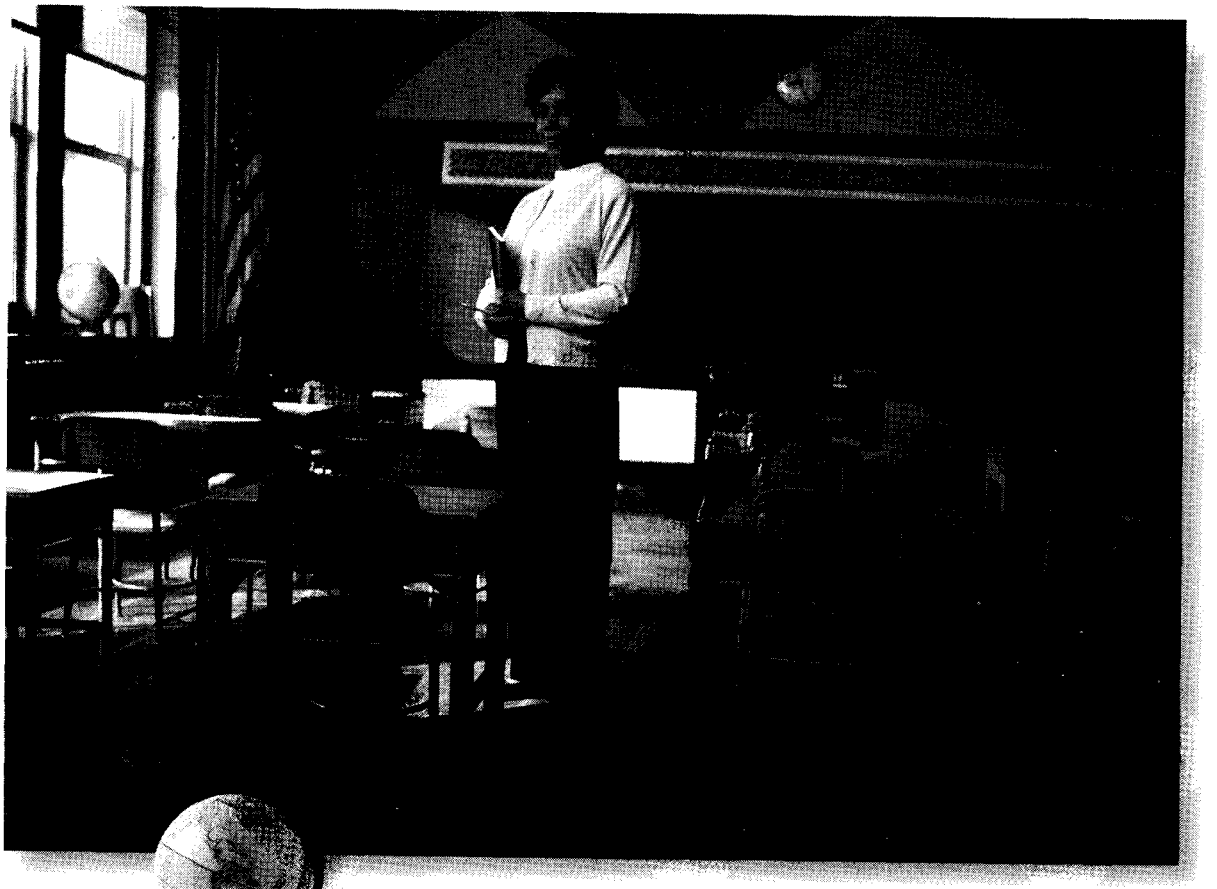
Ambivalence about the exhibits is not limited to whites. Black visitors regularly challenge and debate a woman who depicts a free black woman who owned slaves herself. She has been accused of being haughty and arrogant; we found that her depiction of a woman well versed in the rationalizations of eighteenth-century America rang true.

Sometimes the line between historical reenactment and current reality becomes blurred, as it did when the local militia was attacked by some of the tourists. Likewise, in the *Post* article, a black tourist was quoted about possible modern parallels after observing the forcible break-up of the slave meeting in eighteenth-century Williamsburg. "That's still illegal," she said. "Five blacks on a corner right now—that's grounds for arrest in most places, or at least investigation."

Visitors to Williamsburg's "Enslaving Virginia" series may find it difficult to determine whether modern tourists are experiencing the late twentieth century intruding on the eighteenth, or the other way round. The Williamsburg Foundation deserves credit, in any case, for challenging its visitors and raising questions, thus transcending the Disneyfication of history. □

Peter Feuerherd *is a frequent* Commonweal *contributor.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The bell rings at 8:30, and a roomful of kids pile in. But for some, school is never out, and class is never dismissed.

St. Louis,
Missouri
November 19, 1998
8:25 a.m.

These are everyday heroes, and as they look out for us, we look out for them – with diverse pension and retirement programs.

Our commitment is as fundamental as a-b-c: to help provide those who work in the public service, a future based on sound growth, not undue risk. That's the Spirit of America.

MUTUAL OF AMERICA

320 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022 • 1 800 468 3785 • *www.mutualofamerica.com*
Mutual of America Life Insurance Company is a Registered Broker/Dealer

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED